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SHAKESPEARE'S
TRAGEDY OF
KING RICHARD III
AS PRODUCED BY
EDWIN BOOTH.

Adapted from the Text of the Cambridge Editors, with Introductory Remarks, &c.,

By HENRY L. HINTON.

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY HURD & HOUGHTON,
459 BROOME STREET.

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ENTERED, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1868,

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INTRODUCTION.

OF all the numerous so-called ‘improvements’ of Shakespeare’s plays which saw the light in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Colley Cibber’s *Richard III.* is the only one which still keeps the stage, though Tate’s *King Lear* may be frequently witnessed, and portions of Middleton’s *Witch* are often added to the immortal and unique witch-scenes of *Macbeth*.

Though these departures from the original are such as ‘make the judicious grieve,’ they are nevertheless clung to with that servile and unprogressive spirit which too frequently distinguishes our modern theatre.

The improvement attempted in the case of *Richard III.* is perhaps not without excuse. *Richard III.* is one of a series of historical plays which, in their inter-dependence, form a combined unity. But upon the stage a play must have a unity of its own. Besides, Shakespeare, desirous rather of presenting a historical picture of the times, and of introducing all such characters as may have materially influenced, or have been influenced by, the course of events, sacrificed, to some extent, dramatic effect to historic interest. At a time when the tragic events of this drama were still fresh in the memory, familiarized, as they were, to the popular ear by legends and ballads, and by the chronicles from which Shakespeare derived his materials, such sacrifice was necessary. But these events are now so deeply buried in the past that the audience of the present day regards only the dramatic effect. Certain modifications, then, become requisite, and the problem is, How to adapt the play to the stage with the fewest possible alterations of the text? As to the manner in which Colley Cibber has performed the task, the following remarks by that most acute dramatic critic, Hazlitt, well show:—

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‘ In the patchwork *Richard III.*, which is acted under the sanction of Shakespeare’s name, and which was manufactured by Cibber, some of the most important and striking passages in the principal character have been omitted, to make room for idle and misplaced extracts from other plays ; the only intention of which seems to have been to make the character of Richard as odious and disgusting as possible. It is apparently for no other purpose than to make Gloucester stab King Henry on the stage, that the first abrupt introduction of the character in the opening of the play is lost in the tedious, whining morality of the uxorious king (taken from another play) ; we say tedious, because it interrupts the business of the scene, and loses its beauty and effect by having no intelligible connection with the previous character of the mild, well-meaning monarch. In the same spirit of vulgar caricature is the scene between Richard and Lady Anne (when his wife), interpolated without any authority, merely to gratify this favorite propensity to disgust and loathing. With the same perverse consistency, Richard, after his last fatal struggle, is raised up by some galvanic process, to utter the imprecation, without any motive but pure malignity, which Shakespeare has so properly put into the mouth of Northumberland on hearing of Percy’s death.’

In fact the spirit that seemed to animate Cibber was that Shakespeare needed not simply an adaptation to dramatic necessities not originally contemplated, but also actual improvement ; he shared that estimate of the poet, common to his times, which regarded his genius as grand, it is true, but as wild and inartistic, and as greatly in need of training and pruning. Tate, as Doran tells us, ‘ smirkingly maintained that he wrought into perfection the rough and costly material left by Shakespeare ;’ and even Otway ‘ undertook to rectify what was wanting.’

The adaptation which we have attempted, whatever its demerits, originated in quite a different spirit—a spirit which, reverencing the art, as well as the imagination, of the immortal poet, has allowed of some changes and modifications in the arrangement, but never a departure from the text (excepting a few verbal alterations which the change in the conditions of social life demands). We found it necessary to cut out some portions, and in consequence of these elisions we have been compelled to make a few transpositions. The text adopted is that which has been sanctioned by the Cambridge editors, and which seems to ‘ have bought golden opinions from all sorts ’ of Shakespeare students.

In conclusion, the editor feels emboldened to say, that the present

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adaptation of *Richard III.*, while it adheres very closely to the original, will yet be found more impressive in its dramatic effect, and as an artistic whole, than that ‘improvement’ which has so long held the stage, and dishonored the memory of our revered poet.

Of the actors who have essayed the leading *role* in this tragedy since Richard Burbage originally presented it, Garrick, Cooke, Kean and Booth enjoyed, each in turn, the honor of being ‘the veritable Richard,’ the last having, it may be said, wrested the palm from his predecessor. In the case of Garrick, the part of *Richard III.* was his first attempt with a leading part on the stage. Doran, in his *Annals of the English Stage*, gives the following account of this performance: ‘Of the audience he seemed unconscious, so thoroughly did he identify himself with the character. He surrendered himself to all its requirements, was ready for every phase of passion, every change of humor, and was as wonderful in quiet sarcasm as he was terrific in the hurricane of the battle-scenes. Above all, his audience were delighted with his “nature.” Since Betterton’s death actors had fallen into a rhythmical, mechanical, sing-song cadence. The style still lingers among conservative French tragedians. Garrick spoke not as an orator, but as King Richard himself might have spoken, in like circumstances. The chuckling exultation of his “So much for Buckingham!” * was long a tradition on the stage Hogarth has shown us how he looked, when starting from his dream; and critics tell us that his cry of “Give me another horse!” was the cry of a gallant, fearless man; but that it fell into one of distress as he said, “Bind up my wounds,” while the “Have mercy Heaven,” was moaned piteously, on bended knee. The battle-scene and death excited the utmost enthusiasm of an audience altogether unused to acting like this.’

Some sixty years later George Frederick Cooke, as *Richard III.*, broke through ‘the clouds that had lowered upon’ the stage, and Richard was ‘himself again.’ Cooke’s genius was of the highest kind. As Gloucester, his specialty, it seemed that nature and impulse were his only guides. Whether he adopted the theory of certain writers, who maintain that Richard was not deformed, but was a ‘marvelous proper man,’ is not known, but it is true, however, that he never resorted to the usual practice of wearing an artificial ‘mountain on his back,’ nor did he ‘shape his legs

* This exclamation does not occur in the original play. Garrick acted Cibber’s version of *Richard III.*

of an unequal size,' though these personal traits are so strongly marked in the text. Cooke's triumph was but a flash ; he died in 1812, and scarcely two years had elapsed when Richard was metamorphosed, and the hunch-back tyrant reappeared in the person of Edmund Kean, who, if he did not 'out-herod Herod,' attained a high degree of perfection. 'Joyous and sarcastic in the opening soliloquy ; devilish, as he passed his bright sword through the still breathing body of Lancaster ; audaciously hypocritical, and almost too exulting, in the wooing of Lady Anne ; cruelly kind to the young princes, his eye smiling while his foot seemed restless to crush the two spiders that so vexed his heart ;—in representing all this, there was an originality and a nature which were entirely new to the delighted audience. Then they seemed to behold altogether a new man revealed to them in the first words uttered by him from the throne, "Stand all apart!" from which period to the last struggle with Richmond, there was an uninterrupted succession of beauties ; even in the by-play he found means to extort applause, and a graceful attitude, an almost silent chuckle, a significant glance,—even so common-place a phrase as "Good-night, my lords," uttered before the battle of the morrow, were responded to by acclamations such as are awarded to none but the great masters of the art.'

Three years only have elapsed, and Junius Brutus Booth appears, and dims the lustre of this shining star. Never perhaps did an audience leave a theatre more delighted than that assembled on the 12th of February, 1817, at Covent Garden Theatre, to witness the debut in London of this great tragedian. Booth played Richard ; the audience were electrified from the first.

Booth's field of action was confined mostly to this country ; in fact, it may almost be said he belonged to us, and as it is not long since he trod the boards of our theatres, his wonderful performances are still fresh in the minds of many.

The following critique of Booth's performance of Richard is taken from Gould's recent work on this actor,—a work which, we doubt not, will give its author an equal rank with such dramatic critics as Hazlitt and Coleridge :

'In Mr. Booth's conception the main impulse was most apparent ; the ambition, and not the crimes it caused. There was a certain slow movement at the opening ; a sombre settled purpose, underlying and surrounding his most brilliant action ; and giving place at last to a preternatural energy, and fiery expedition, only when the object, the crown, was attained, and all the resources of his fertile brain were drawn on and combined, in the effort to retain the regal power he had usurped.'

‘ With head bent in thought, arms folded, and slow long step, longer it would seem than the height of his figure might warrant, yet perfectly natural to him, and so that his lifted foot emerged first into view, Booth appeared upon the scene, enveloped and absorbed in the character of Richard. If tumultuous plaudits extorted from him a momentary recognition of the audience, it was done with no suspension of the look and action of the character. That look and action were profoundly self-involved. He delivered the soliloquy beginning—

“ Now is the winter of our discontent,”

in an inward many-stringed resonance of tone, varied by outbursts of passionate vehemence, when “ descanting on his own deformity,” and reaching through murderous intent after the glorious diadem. He spoke like a man thinking aloud, not as if reciting from memory. Indeed, to speak with strictness, he never re-cited at all. He possessed himself of the character and its language, and then uttered it from inspiration, and according to the emergency of the scene and the situation.

‘ Originality in Mr. Booth’s performances was a necessity of his genius. His acting was a congeries of causes, co-ordinated with the main cause, the conception of the character. Kean’s manner of acting, on the contrary, was a series of disconnected brilliant effects. Gloster’s wooing scene with Lady Anne is a case in point. The best character portrait of Kean represents him on one knee, smiling, and saying—

“ Take up the sword again or take up me.”

Hazlitt says: “ The whole scene was an admirable exhibition of smooth and smiling villainy.” Booth made no such exhibition. He did not kneel gracefully. The question with him was not, how is courtship done; but how would Gloster do it. Nothing would be more likely to charm so weak a woman as Lady Anne, than the repentance and humility of so powerful a nature as that of Richard. “ You may relish him more in the soldier than in the lover.” Personal flattery was thrown in as a spice, and not as the substance of the dish he offered her.

‘ In the concluding scenes of this play he seemed, when in his best mood, to be filled with “ strange fire.” He showed infinite vigilance of mind, relentless mastery of will. The tent scene, in which Richard starts out of his remorseful dream, was one of terrific grandeur, and never failed of producing an electrical effect.

‘ In the last scene he fought with Richmond desperately; when wounded

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and overthrown, fought on the ground. Finally, gathering himself up with one mighty effort, he plunged headlong at his cool antagonist, was disarmed, and felled to the earth. Cibber has put into the mouth of the dying Richard some wretched and inhuman stuff, which, to the credit of Mr. Booth be it said, we could never distinctly hear from his lips. It sounded only like—

“The cloudy groan
Of dying thunder on the distant wind.”

COSTUME.

King Richard III. contains a greater number and variety of characters than any other of Shakespeare's plays; consequently its production on the stage admits and demands great elaborateness and magnificence of dress.

The variety of styles in vogue during the reigns of Edward IV. and Richard III. is so great that considerable freedom of choice may be left to the manager, or to the artists who essay the respective roles. The following abstract of Charles Knight's remarks on the costume at this period, will give some general idea of the ruling features.

The Monk of Croyland, according to Knight, informs us that ‘the new fashion’ which Edward IV. ‘chose for his last state dress, was one having very full hanging sleeves, like a monk's, lined with the most sumptuous furs, and so rolled over his shoulders as to give his tall person an air of peculiar grandeur.’ This fashion was continued during the remainder of the century, and was not altogether abandoned in the reign of Henry VIII. Short gowns and upper-dresses of various descriptions were worn at this time with long sleeves, having an opening in front, through which the arm came, leaving the outer sleeve to hang as an ornament from the shoulder. Feathers became more frequent toward the close of the reign, one or more being adjusted to the back part of the cap, with jewels ornamenting the stem.

One of the principal characteristics in male attire during the reign of Edward, was the exceeding shortness of the jackets, doublets, or purpoints, and the padding out of the shoulders of them with large waddings called mahoitre, the sleeves being slit up the back or across the elbow to show those of the white shirt. Bonnets of cloth, a quarter of an ell in height, were worn by the beaux of the day, who also, instead of cropping the hair all round, as in the last three reigns, suffered it to grow to such a length that it came into their eyes. The toes of their shoes and boots were at first ridiculously long and pointed, and toward the close of the

reign as preposterously broad and round. By a sumptuary law enacted in the last year of Edward's reign, we find also that purple cloth of gold and silk of a purple color were confined to the use of the royal family, while none under the degree of a duke might wear cloth of gold or tissue. Inferior noblemen were restricted to plain cloth of gold, knights to velvet, esquires to satin, &c.

In the female dress of this period there are some marked peculiarities. The gowns have very long trains, with broad velvet borders. The waists are very short, and are confined by broad belts buckled before. The steeple head-dress (similar to the Cauchoise, still worn in Normandy, and so called from the *Pays de Caux*) is a peculiar mark of this reign in England.

Such is the general character of the costume of the reign of Edward. In the reign of Richard some modifications occur, which we proceed to note.

There are two portraits of Richard III. in the meeting-room of the Society of Antiquaries at Somerset House. The first represents the king attired in a robe of cloth of gold over a close dress of scarlet, wearing a black cap with a pearl ornament, and having his hair brown and long. In the other, Richard is dressed in a black robe, with sleeves of black and crimson, an under-dress of cloth of gold, and a small black cap. In both he is represented as a hard-featured man, with rather a forbidding countenance.

Of the female attire during Richard's reign, the waists are not so short, the sleeves are very tight and long, and a cap or caul of gold embroidery, covered by a veil of some very transparent material, stiffened out in the form of wings, takes the place of the steeple head-dress.

The livery colors of the Tudor family were white and green, those of the house of Lancaster white and blue, and the house of York murrey and blue. The mayor, it would seem, was usually arrayed, on state occasions, in crimson or scarlet robes; the commonalty of this period are represented in plain shirts or tunics extending nearly to the knees, and with pointed shoes.

Plate armor was in general use. One of the standards of Henry, Earl of Richmond, at Bosworth-field, was a red dragon upon white sarsenet. Another was a dun cow upon 'yellow tartuhe.' Richard's armorial supporters were white boars. A white boar was also his favorite badge of cognizance, which was worn by the higher order of his partisans, appended to a collar of roses and suns.

Further details of the costume of the period of this play may be gathered from our remarks on costume prefacing *Romeo and Juliet*.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Of this adaptation of *King Richard III.* as cast for its first representation at Booth's Theatre, New York,

KING EDWARD the Fourth .....	.....
EDWARD, Prince of Wales, } afterwards King Edward V., } sons to the King. { .....	.....
RICHARD, Duke of York, .....	.....
GEORGE, Duke of Clarence, .....	.....
RICHARD, Duke of Gloucester, } brothers to the King. { .....	.....
afterwards King Richard III., .....	.....
HENRY, Earl of Richmond, afterwards King Henry VII. ....	.....
CARDINAL BOURCHIER, Archbishop of Canterbury. ....	.....
JOHN MORTON, Bishop of Ely. ....	.....
DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM. ....	.....
DUKE OF NORFOLK. ....	.....
EARL OF SURREY, his son. ....	.....
EARL RIVERS, brother to Elizabeth. ....	.....
MARQUESS OF DORSET, } sons to Elizabeth. { .....	.....
LORD GREY, .....	.....
EARL OF OXFORD. ....	.....
LORD HASTINGS. ....	.....
LORD STANLEY, called also EARL OF DERBY. ....	.....
LORD LOVEL. ....	.....
SIR THOMAS VAUGHAN. ....	.....
SIR RICHARD RATCLIFF. ....	.....
SIR WILLIAM CATESBY. ....	.....
SIR JAMES BLOUNT. ....	.....
SIR WALTER HERBERT. ....	.....
SIR ROBERT BRACKENBURY, Lieutenant of the Tower. ....	.....
Lord Mayor of London. ....	.....
A Gentleman.	Second Citizen.
A Page.	Third Citizen.
First Messenger.	Fourth Citizen.
Second Messenger.	First Murderer.
Third Messenger.	Second Murderer.
First Citizen.	Ghost of King Henry VI.
Ghost of Prince Edward. ....	.....
ELIZABETH, queen to King Edward IV. ....	.....
MARGARET, widow of King Henry VI. ....	.....
DUCHESS OF YORK, mother to King Edward IV., } Clarence and Gloucester. } .....	.....
LADY ANNE, widow of Edward, Prince of Wales, on } to King Henry VI.; afterwards married to Richard. }	*
A young daughter of Clarence, Bishops, Lords, Attendants, Soldiers, Citizens, &c.	.....
SCENE : England.	.....

Note. — The asterisks that occasionally appear in the text refer to the glossary.

THE TRAGEDY
OF
KING RICHARD III.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *London. A street.*

Enter RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER.

Glou. Now is the winter of our discontent
Made glorious summer by this sun¹ of York ;
And all the clouds that lour'd upon our house
In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.
Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths ;
Our bruised arms hung up for monuments ;
Our stern alarums changed to merry meetings,
Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.*
Grim-visaged war hath smooth'd his wrinkled front ;
And now, instead of mounting barbed* steeds
To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,
He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber
To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.
But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks,

¹ The cognizance of Edward IV. was a sun radiant, in memory of the celestial phenomenon which appeared on the morning of the battle of Mortimer's Cross.

Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass ;
 I, that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's majesty
 To strut before a wanton ambling nymph ;
 I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
 Cheated of feature* by dissembling nature,
 Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time
 Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
 And that so lamely and unfashionable
 That dogs bark at me as I halt by them ;
 Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,
 Have no delight to pass away the time,
 Unless to spy my shadow in the sun
 And descant on mine own deformity :
 And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,
 To entertain these fair well-spoken days,
 I am determined to prove a villain
 And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
 Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous,
 By drunken prophecies, libels, and dreams,
 To set my brother Clarence and the king
 In deadly hate the one against the other :
 And if King Edward be as true and just
 As I am subtle, false and treacherous,
 This day should Clarence closely be mew'd* up,
 About a prophecy, which says that G
 Of Edward's heirs the murderer shall be.
 Dive, thoughts, down to my soul : here Clarence comes.

Enter CLARENCE, guarded, and BRAKENBURY.

Brother, good day : what means this armed guard
 That waits upon your grace ?

Clar. His majesty,
 Tendering my person's safety, hath appointed
 This conduct to convey me to the Tower.

Glou. Upon what cause ?

Clar. Because my name is George.

Glo. Alack, my lord, that fault is none of yours ;
He should, for that, commit your godfathers :
O, belike his majesty hath some intent
That you shall be new-christen'd in the Tower.
But what's the matter, Clarence ? may I know ?

Clar. Yea, Richard, when I know ; for I protest
As yet I do not : but, as I can learn,
He hearkens after prophecies and dreams ;
And from the cross-row plucks the letter G,
And says a wizard told him that by G
His issue disinherited should be ;
And, for my name of George begins with G,
It follows in his thought that I am he.
These, as I learn, and such like toys as these
Have moved his highness to commit me now.

Glo. Why, this it is, when men are ruled by women :
'Tis not the king that sends you to the Tower ;
My Lady Grey his wife, Clarence, 'tis she
That tempers* him to this extremity.
Was it not she and that good man of worship,
Anthony Woodville, her brother there,
That made him send Lord Hastings to the Tower,
From whence this present day he is deliver'd ?
We are not safe, Clarence ; we are not safe.

Clar. By heaven, I think there's no man is secure
But the queen's kindred and night-walking heralds
That trudge betwixt the king and Mistress Shore.
Heard ye not what an humble suppliant
Lord Hastings was to her for his delivery ?

Glo. Humbly complaining to her deity
Got my lord chamberlain his liberty.
I'll tell you what ; I think it is our way,
If we will keep in favour with the king,
To be her men and wear her livery :

The jealous o'erworn widow and herself,
Since that our brother dubb'd them gentlewomen,
Are mighty gossips in this monarchy.

Brak. I beseech your graces both to pardon me ;
His majesty hath straitly given in charge
That no man shall have private conference,
Of what degree soever, with his brother.

Glou. Even so ; an't please your worship, Brakenbury,
You may partake of any thing we say :
We speak no treason, man : we say the king
Is wise and virtuous, and his noble queen
Well struck in years, fair, and not jealous ;
We say that Shore's wife hath a pretty foot,
A cherry lip, a bonny eye, a passing pleasing tongue ;
And that the queen's kindred are made gentle-folks :
How say you, sir ? can you deny all this ?

Brak. I beseech your grace to pardon me, and withal
Forbear your conference with the noble duke.

Clar. We know thy charge, Brakenbury, and will obey.

Glou. We are the queen's abjects, and must obey.
Brother, farewell : I will unto the king ;
And whatsoever you will employ me in,
Were it to call King Edward's widow sister,
I will perform it to enfranchise you.
Meantime, this deep disgrace in brotherhood
Touches me deeper than you can imagine.

Clar. I know it pleaseth neither of us well.

Glou. Well, your imprisonment shall not be long ;
I will deliver you, or else lie for you :¹
Meantime, have patience.

Clar. I must perforce. Farewell.

[*Exeunt Clarence, Brakenbury, and Guard.*]

Glou. Go, tread the path that thou shalt ne'er return,

¹ That is, be imprisoned in your stead.

Simple, plain Clarence ! I do love thee so,
That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven,
If heaven will take the present at our hands.
But who comes here ? the new-deliver'd Hastings.

Enter LORD HASTINGS.

Hast. Good time of day unto my gracious lord !

Glo. As much unto my good lord chamberlain !

Well are you welcome to the open air.

How hath your lordship brook'd imprisonment ?

Hast. With patience, noble lord, as prisoners must :
But I shall live, my lord, to give them thanks
That were the cause of my imprisonment.

Glo. No doubt, no doubt ; and so shall Clarence too ;
For they that were your enemies are his,
And have prevail'd as much on him as you.

Hast. More pity that the eagle should be mew'd,
While kites and buzzards prey at liberty.

Glo. What news abroad ?

Hast. No news so bad abroad as this at home ;
The king is sickly, weak and melancholy,
And his physicians fear him mightily.

Glo. Now, by Saint Paul, this news is bad indeed.
O, he hath kept an evil diet long,
And overmuch consumed his royal person :
'Tis very grievous to be thought upon.
What, is he in his bed ?

Hast. He is.

Glo. Go you before, and I will follow you. [Exit Hastings.
He cannot live, I hope ; and must not die
Till George be pack'd with post-horse up to heaven.
I'll in, to urge his hatred more to Clarence,
With lies well steel'd with weighty arguments ;
And, if I fail not in my deep intent,
Clarence hath not another day to live :

Which done, God take King Edward to his mercy,
And leave the world for me to bustle in !
For then I'll marry Warwick's youngest daughter.
What though I kill'd her husband and her father ?
The readiest way to make the wench amends
Is to become her husband and her father :
The which will I ; not all so much for love
As for another secret close intent,
By marrying her which I must reach unto.
But yet I run before my horse to market :
Clarence still breathes ; Edward still lives and reigns :
When they are gone, then must I count my gains. [Exit.]

Enter the corpse of KING HENRY the Sixth, Gentlemen with halberds to guard it, LADY ANNE being the mourner.

Anne. Set down, set down your honourable load—
If honour may be shrouded in a hearse—
Whilst I awhile obsequiously* lament
The untimely fall of virtuous Lancaster.
Poor key-cold* figure of a holy king !
Pale ashes of the house of Lancaster !
Thou bloodless remnant of that royal blood !
Be it lawful that I invoke thy ghost,
To hear the lamentations of poor Anne,
Wife to thy Edward, to thy slaughter'd son,
Stabb'd by the selfsame hand that made these wounds !
Cursed be the hand that made these fatal holes !
Cursed be the heart that had the heart to do it !
Cursed the blood that let this blood from hence !
More direful hap betide that hated wretch,
That makes us wretched by the death of thee,
Than I can wish to adders, spiders, toads,
Or any creeping venom'd thing that lives !
If ever he have child, abortive be it,
Prodigious, and untimely brought to light,

Whose ugly and unnatural aspect
May fright the hopeful mother at the view ;
And that be heir to his unhappiness !
If ever he have wife, let her be made
As miserable by the death of him
As I am made by my poor lord and thee !
Come, now toward Chertsey with your holy load,
Taken from Paul's to be interred there ;
And still, as you are weary of the weight,
Rest you, whiles I lament King Henry's corse.

Enter Gloucester.

Glou. Stay, you that bear the corse, and set it down.

Anne. What black magician conjures up this fiend,
To stop devoted charitable deeds ?

Glou. Villains, set down the corse ; or, by Saint Paul,
I'll make a corse of him that disobeys.

Gent. My lord, stand back, and let the coffin pass.

Glou. Unmanner'd dog ! stand thou, when I command :
Advance thy halberd higher than my breast,
Or, by Saint Paul, I'll strike thee to my foot,
And spurn upon thee, beggar, for thy boldness.

Anne. Avaunt, thou dreadful minister of hell !
Thou hadst but power over his mortal body,
His soul thou canst not have ; therefore, be gone.

Glou. Sweet saint, for charity, be not so curst.

Anne. Foul devil, hence, and trouble us not.
Either heaven with lightning strike the murderer dead,
Or earth, gape open wide and eat him quick,
As thou dost swallow up this good king's blood,
Which his hell-govern'd arm hath butchered !

Glou. Lady, you know no rules of charity,
Which renders good for bad, blessings for curses.

Anne. Villain, thou know'st no law of God nor man :
No beast so fierce but knows some touch of pity.

Glou. Vouchsafe, divine perfection of a woman,
Of these supposed evils, to give me leave,
By circumstance, but to acquit myself.

Anne. Vouchsafe, diffused* infection of a man,
For these known evils, but to give me leave,
By circumstance, to curse thy cursed self.

Glou. Fairer than tongue can name thee, let me have
Some patient leisure to excuse myself.

Anne. Fouler than heart can think thee, thou canst make
No excuse current, but to hang thyself.

Glou. By such despair, I should accuse myself.

Anne. And, by despairing, shouldst thou stand excused
For doing worthy vengeance on thyself,
That didst unworthy slaughter upon others.

Glou. Say that I slew them not?

Anne. Why, then they are not dead:
But dead they are, and, devilish slave, by thee.

Glou. I did not kill your husband.

Anne. Why, then he is alive.

Glou. Nay, he is dead; and slain by Edward's hand.

Anne. In thy foul throat thou liest: Queen Margaret saw
Thy murderous falchion smoking in his blood;
The which thou once didst bend against her breast,
But that thy brothers beat aside the point.

Glou. I was provoked by her slanderous tongue,
Which laid their guilt upon my guiltless shoulders.

Anne. Thou wast provoked by thy bloody mind,
That never dreamt on aught but butcheries:
Didst thou not kill this king?

Glou. I grant ye.

Anne. Dost grant me, hedgehog? then, God grant me too
Thou mayst be damned for that wicked deed!
O, he was gentle, mild, and virtuous!

Glou. The fitter for the King of heaven, that hath him.

Anne. He is in heaven, where thou shalt never come.

Glou. Let him thank me, that holp to send him thither ;
For he was fitter for that place than earth.

Anne. And thou unfit for any place but hell.

Glou. Yes, one place else, if you will hear me name it.

Anne. Some dungeon.

Glou. Your bed-chamber.

Anne. Ill rest betide the chamber where thou liest !

Glou. So will it, madam, till I lie with you.

Anne. I hope so.

Glou. I know so. But, gentle Lady Anne,
To leave this keen encounter of our wits,
And fall somewhat into a slower method,
Is not the causer of the timeless deaths
Of these Plantagenets, Henry and Edward,
As b'ameful as the executioner ?

Anne. Thou art the cause, and most accursed effect.

Glou. Your beauty was the cause of that effect ;
Your beauty, which did haunt me in my sleep
To undertake the death of all the world,
So I might live one hour in your sweet bosom.

Anne. If I thought that, I tell thee, homicide,
These nails should rend that beauty from my cheeks.

Glou. These eyes could not endure sweet beauty's wreck ;
You should not blemish it, if I stood by :
As all the world is cheered by the sun,
So I by that ; it is my day, my life.

Anne. Black night o'ershade thy day, and death thy life !

Glou. Curse not thyself, fair creature ; thou art both.

Anne. I would I were, to be revenged on thee.

Glou. It is a quarrel most unnatural,
To be revenged on him that loveth you.

Anne. It is a quarrel just and reasonable,
To be revenged on him that slew my husband.

Glou. He that bereft thee, lady, of thy husband,
Did it to help thee to a better husband.

Anne. His better doth not breathe upon the earth.

Glou. He lives that loves you better than he could.

Anne. Name him.

Glou. Plantagenet.

Anne. Why, that was he.

Glou. The selfsame name, but one of better nature.

Anne. Where is he?

Glou. Here.

Anne. Out of my sight ! thou dost infect my eyes.

Glou. Thine eyes, sweet lady, have infected mine.

Anne. Would they were basilisks,* to strike thee dead !

Glou. I would they were, that I might die at once ;
For now they kill me with a living death.

Those eyes of thine from mine have drawn salt tears,
Shamed their aspect with store of childish drops :

These eyes, which never shed remorseful tear,
No, when my father York and Edward wept,
To hear the piteous moan that Rutland made
When black-faced Clifford shook his sword at him ;

Nor when thy warlike father, like a child,
Told the sad story of my father's death,
And twenty times made pause to sob and weep,
That all the standers-by had wet their cheeks,
Like trees bedash'd with rain : in that sad time
My manly eyes did scorn an humble tear ;

And what these sorrows could not thence exhale,*
Thy beauty hath, and made them blind with weeping.
I never sued to friend nor enemy ;
My tongue could never learn sweet smoothing words ;
But, now thy beauty is proposed my fee,
My proud heart sues, and prompts my tongue to speak.

[*She looks scornfully at him.*

Teach not thy lips such scorn, for they were made

For kissing, lady, not for such contempt.

If thy revengeful heart cannot forgive,

Lo, here I lend thee this sharp-pointed sword ;
Which if thou please to hide in this true bosom,
And let the soul forth that adoreth thee,
I lay it naked to the deadly stroke,
And humbly beg the death upon my knee.

[*He lays his breast open : she offers at it with his sword.*

Nay, do not pause ; for I did kill King Henry,
But 'twas thy beauty that provoked me.

Nay, now dispatch ; 'twas I that stabb'd young Edward,
But 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on.

[*Here she lets fall the sword.*

Take up the sword again, or take up me.

Anne. Arise, dissembler : though I wish thy death,
I will not be the executioner.

Glou. Then bid me kill myself, and I will do it.

Anne. I have already.

Glou. Tush, that was in thy rage :
Speak it again, and, even with the word,
That hand, which, for thy love, did kill thy love,
Shall, for thy love, kill a far truer love ;
To both their deaths thou shalt be accessory.

Anne. I would I knew thy heart.

Glou. 'Tis figured in my tongue.

Anne. I fear me both are false.

Glou. Then never man was true.

Anne. Well, well, put up your sword.

Glou. Say, then, my peace is made.

Anne. That shall you know hereafter.

Glou. But shall I live in hope ?

Anne. All men, I hope, live so.

Glou. Vouchsafe to wear this ring.

Look, how this ring encompasseth thy finger,
Even so thy breast encloseth my poor heart ;
Wear both of them, for both of them are thine.
And if thy poor devoted suppliant may

But beg one favour at thy gracious hand,
Thou dost confirm his happiness for ever.

Anne. What is it?

Glou. That it would please thee leave these sad designs
To him that hath more cause to be a mourner,
And presently repair to Crosby Place ;
Where, after I have solemnly interr'd
At Chertsey monastery this noble king,
And wet his grave with my repentant tears,
I will with all expedient* duty see you :
For divers unknown reasons, I beseech you,
Grant me this boon.

Anne. With all my heart ; and much it joys me too,
To see you are become so penitent.
Tressel and Berkeley, go along with me.

Glou. Bid me farewell.

Anne. 'Tis more than you deserve ;
But since you teach me how to flatter you,
Imagine I have said farewell already.

[*Exeunt Lady Anne, Tressel and Berkeley.*]

Gent. Towards Chertsey, noble lord ?

Glou. No, to White-Friars ; there attend my coming.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. A street.

Enter GLOUCESTER.

Glou. Was ever woman in this humour woo'd ?
Was ever woman in this humour won ?
I'll have her ; but I will not keep her long.
What ! I, that kill'd her husband and his father,
To take her in her heart's extremest hate,
With curses in her mouth, tears in her eyes,
The bleeding witness of her hatred by ;
Having God, her conscience, and these bars against me,

And I nothing to back my suit at all,
But the plain devil and dissembling looks,
And yet to win her, all the world to nothing !
Ha !

Hath she forgot already that brave prince,
Edward, her lord, whom I, some three months since,
Stabb'd in my angry mood at Tewksbury ?
A sweeter and a lovelier gentleman,
Framed in the prodigality of nature,
Young, valiant, wise, and, no doubt, right royal,
The spacious world cannot again afford :
And will she yet debase her eyes on me,
That cropp'd the golden prime of this sweet prince,
And made her widow to a woful bed ?
On me, whose all not equals Edward's moiety ?
On me, that halt and am unshapen thus ?
My dukedom to a beggarly denier,*
I do mistake my person all this while :
Upon my life, she finds, although I cannot,
Myself to be a marvellous proper man.
I'll be at charges for a looking-glass,
And entertain some score or two of tailors,
To study fashions to adorn my body :
Since I am crept in favour with myself,
I will maintain it with some little cost.
But first I'll turn yon fellow in his grave ;
And then return lamenting to my love.
Shine out, fair sun, till I have bought a glass,
That I may see my shadow as I pass.

[Exit.

SCENE III. *The palace.*

Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH, LORD RIVERS, and LORD GREY.

Riv. Have patience, madam : there's no doubt his majesty

Will soon recover his accustom'd health.

Grey. In that you brook it ill, it makes him worse :
Therefore, for God's sake, entertain good comfort,
And cheer his grace with quick and merry words.

Q. Eliz. If he were dead, what would betide of me ?

Riv. No other harm but loss of such a lord.

Q. Eliz. The loss of such a lord includes all harm.

Grey. The heavens have bless'd you with a goodly son,
To be your comforter when he is gone.

Q. Eliz. Oh, he is young, and his minority
Is put unto the trust of Richard Gloucester,
A man that loves not me, nor none of you.

Riv. Is it concluded he shall be protector ?

Q. Eliz. It is determined, not concluded yet :
But so it must be, if the king miscarry.

Enter BUCKINGHAM and DERBY.

Grey. Here come the lords of Buckingham and Derby.

Buck. Good time of day unto your royal grace !

Der. God make your majesty joyful as you have been !

Q. Eliz. Saw you the king to-day, my Lord of Derby ?

Der. But now the Duke of Buckingham and I
Are come from visiting his majesty.

Q. Eliz. What likelihood of his amendment, lords ?

Buck. Madam, good hope ; his grace speaks cheerfully.

Q. Eliz. God grant him health ! Did you confer with him ?

Buck. Madam, we did : he desires to make atonement *
Betwixt the Duke of Gloucester and your brothers,
And betwixt them and my lord chamberlain ;
And sent to warn * them to his royal presence.

Q. Eliz. Would all were well ! but that will never be :
I fear our happiness is at the highest.

Enter GLOUCESTER, HASTINGS, and DORSET.

Glou. They do me wrong, and I will not endure it :

Who are they that complain unto the king,
 That I, forsooth, am stern and love them not ?
 By holy Paul, they love his grace but lightly
 That fill his ears with such dissentious rumours.
 Because I cannot flatter and speak fair,
 Smile in men's faces, smooth, deceive and cog,
 Duck with French nods and apish courtesy,
 I must be held a rancorous enemy.
 Cannot a plain man live and think no harm,
 But thus his simple truth must be abused
 By silken, sly, insinuating Jacks ?

Riv. To whom in all this presence speaks your grace ?

Glou. To thee, that hast nor honesty nor grace.

When have I injured thee ? when done thee wrong ?
 Or thee ? or thee ? or any of your faction ?
 A plague upon you all ! His royal person—
 Whom God preserve better than you would wish !—
 Cannot be quiet scarce a breathing-while,
 But you must trouble him with lewd * complaints.

Q. Eliz. Brother of Gloucester, you mistake the matter.
 The king, of his own royal disposition,
 And not provoked by any suitor else ;
 Aiming, belike, at your interior hatred,
 Which in your outward action shows itself
 Against my kindred, brothers, and myself,
 Makes him to send ; that thereby he may gather
 The ground of your ill-will, and so remove it.

Glou. I cannot tell : the world is grown so bad,
 That wrens make prey where eagles dare not perch :
 Since every Jack * became a gentleman,
 There's many a gentle person made a Jack.

Q. Eliz. Come, come, we know your meaning, brother Gloucester ;

You envy my advancement and my friends' :
 God grant we never may have need of you !

Glou. Meantime, God grants that we have need of you :
 Our brother is imprison'd by your means,
 Myself disgraced, and the nobility
 Held in contempt ; whilst many fair promotions
 Are daily given to ennable those
 That scarce, some two days since, were worth a noble.

Q. Eliz. By Him that raised me to this careful height
 From that contented hap which I enjoy'd,
 I never did incense his majesty
 Against the Duke of Clarence, but have been
 An earnest advocate to plead for him.
 My lord, you do me shameful injury,
 Falsely to draw me in these vile suspects.*

Glou. You may deny that you were not the cause
 Of my Lord Hastings' late imprisonment.

Riv. She may, my lord, for—

Glou. She may, Lord Rivers ! why, who knows not so ?
 She may do more, sir, than denying that :
 She may help you to many fair preferments ;
 And then deny her aiding hand therein,
 And lay those honours on your high deserts.
 What may she not ? She may, yea, marry, may she,—

Riv. What, marry, may she ?

Glou. What, marry, may she ! marry with a king,
 A bachelor, a handsome stripling too :
 I wis * your grandam had a worser match.

Q. Eliz. My Lord of Gloucester, I have too long borne
 Your blunt upbraidings and your bitter scoffs :
 By heaven, I will acquaint his majesty
 With those gross taunts I often have endured.
 I had rather be a country servant-maid
 Than a great queen, with this condition,
 To be thus taunted, scorn'd, and baited at :

Enter QUEEN MARGARET behind.

Small joy have I in being England's queen.

Q. Mar. And lessen'd be that small, God, I beseech thee !
Thy honour, state and seat is due to me.

Glou. What ! threat you me with telling of the king ?
Tell him, and spare not : look, what I have said
I will avouch in presence of the king :
I dare adventure to be sent to the Tower.
'Tis time to speak ; my pains are quite forgot.
Ere you were queen, yea, or your husband king,
I was a pack-horse in his great affairs ;
A weeder out of his proud adversaries,
A liberal rewarder of his friends :
To royalise his blood I spilt mine own.

Q. Mar. Yea, and much better blood than his or thine.

Glou. In all which time you and your husband Grey
Were factious for the house of Lancaster ;
And, Rivers, so were you. Was not your husband
In Margaret's battle¹ at Saint Alban's slain ?
Let me put in your minds, if you forget,
What you have been ere now, and what you are ;
Withal, what I have been, and what I am.

Q. Mar. A murderous villain, and so still thou art.

Glou. Poor Clarence did forsake his father, Warwick ;
Yea, and forswore himself,—which Jesu pardon !—

Q. Mar. Which God revenge !

Glou. To fight on Edward's party for the crown ;
And for his meed, poor lord, he is mew'd * up.
I would to God my heart were flint, like Edward's ;
Or Edward's soft and pitiful, like mine :
I am too childish-foolish for this world.

Q. Mar. Hie thee to hell for shame, and leave the world,
Thou cacodeemon ! there thy kingdom is.

Riv. My Lord of Gloucester, in those busy days
Which here you urge to prove us enemies,

¹ Not in her fight, but in her army. Instances of this use of the word are numerous in Shakespeare.

We follow'd then our lord, our lawful king :
So should we you, if you should be our king.

Glou. If I should be ! I had rather be a pedlar :
Far be it from my heart, the thought of it !

Q. Eliz. As little joy, my lord, as you suppose
You should enjoy, were you this country's king,
As little joy may you suppose in me,
That I enjoy, being the queen thereof.

Q. Mar. A little joy enjoys the queen thereof ;
For I am she, and altogether joyless.

I can no longer hold me patient.

[*Advancing.*]

Hear me, you wrangling pirates, that fall out
In sharing that which you have pill'd from me !
Which of you trembles not that looks on me ?
If not, that, I being queen, you bow like subjects,
Yet that, by you deposed, you quake like rebels ?
O gentle villain, do not turn away !

Glou. Foul wrinkled witch, what makest thou in my sight ?

Q. Mar. But repetition of what thou hast marr'd ;
That will I make* before I let thee go.

Glou. Wert thou not banished on pain of death ?

Q. Mar. I was ; but I do find more pain in banishment
Than death can yield me here by my abode.
A husband and a son thou owest to me ;
And thou a kingdom ; all of you allegiance :
The sorrow that I have, by right is yours,
And all the pleasures you usurp are mine.

Glou. The curse my noble father laid on thee,
When thou didst crown his warlike brows with paper
And with thy scorns drew'st rivers from his eyes,
And then, to dry them, gavest the duke a clout
Steep'd in the faultless blood of pretty Rutland,—
His curses, then from bitterness of soul
Denounced against thee, are all fall'n upon thee ;
And God, not we, hath plagued thy bloody deed.

Q. Eliz. So just is God, to right the innocent.

Hast. O, 'twas the foulest deed to slay that babe,
And the most merciless that e'er was heard of !

Riv. Tyrants themselves wept when it was reported.

Dor. No man but prophesied revenge for it.

Buck. Northumberland, then present, wept to see it.

Q. Mar. What ! were you snarling all before I came,
Ready to catch each other by the throat,

And turn you all your hatred now on me ?

Did York's dread curse prevail so much with heaven

That Henry's death, my lovely Edward's death,

Their kingdom's loss, my woful banishment,

Could all but answer for that peevish brat ?

Can curses pierce the clouds and enter heaven ?

Why, then, give way, dull clouds, to my quick curses !

If not by war, by surfeit die your king,

As ours by murder, to make him a king !

Edward thy son, which now is Prince of Wales,

For Edward my son, which was Prince of Wales,

Die in his youth by like untimely violence !

Thyself a queen, for me that was a queen,

Outlive thy glory, like my wretched self !

Long mayst thou live to wail thy children's loss ;

And see another, as I see thee now,

Deck'd in thy rights, as thou art stall'd in mine !

Long die thy happy days before thy death ;

And, after many lengthen'd hours of grief,

Die neither mother, wife, nor England's queen !

Rivers and Dorset, you were standers by,

And so wast thou, Lord Hastings, when my son

Was stabb'd with bloody daggers : God, I pray him,

That none of you may live your natural age,

But by some unlook'd accident cut off !

Glou. Have done thy charm, thou hateful wither'd hag !

Q. Mar. And leave out thee ? stay, dog, for thou shalt hear me.

If heaven have any grievous plague in store
 Exceeding those that I can wish upon thee,
 O, let them keep it till thy sins be ripe,
 And then hurl down their indignation
 On thee, the troubler of the poor world's peace !
 The worm of conscience still begnaw thy soul !
 Thy friends suspect for traitors while thou livest,
 And take deep traitors for thy dearest friends !
 No sleep close up that deadly eye of thine,
 Unless it be whilst some tormenting dream
 Affrights thee with a hell of ugly devils !
 Thou elvish-mark'd, abortive, rooting hog !
 Thou that wast seal'd in thy nativity
 The slave of nature¹ and the son of hell !
 Thou rag of honour ! thou detested—

Glou. Margaret.

Q. Mar. Richard !

Glou. Ha !

Q. Mar. I call thee not.

Glou. I cry thee mercy then, for I had thought
 That thou hadst call'd me all these bitter names.

Q. Mar. Why, so I did ; but look'd for no reply.
 O, let me make the period to my curse !

Glou. 'Tis done by me, and ends in 'Margaret.'

Q. Eliz. Thus have you breathed your curse against yourself.

Q. Mar. Poor painted queen, vain flourish of my fortune !

Why strew'st thou sugar on that bottled spider,

¹ It would seem that epithets could not be better applied than those in this line ; and yet all manner of contrivance has been used to avoid calling Gloucester the slave of nature ; as for instance, 'the *shame* of nature,' 'the *scorn* of nature,' and 'the *stain* of nature.' But 'the slave of nature' here does not mean, as the correctors evidently suppose it does,—one who serves nature, one who is a bondman to nature ; but one who is the lowest, the most servile, in the whole realm of nature. When one Irishman calls another 'the thief o'the worrld,' he does not mean to accuse the other of purloining this planet, but of being eminently *the thief* of the world. So Margaret calls Gloucester the slave of nature.—WHITE.

Whose deadly web ensnareth thee about ?
Fool, fool ! thou whet'st a knife to kill thyself.
The time will come that thou shalt wish for me
To help thee curse that poisonous bunch-back'd toad.

Hast. False-boding woman, end thy frantic curse,
Lest to thy harm thou move our patience.

Q. Mar. Foul shame upon you ! you have all moved mine.

Riv. Were you well served, you would be taught your duty.

Q. Mar. To serve me well, you all should do me duty,
Teach me to be your queen, and you my subjects :
O, serve me well, and teach yourselves that duty !

Dor. Dispute not with her ; she is lunatic.

Q. Mar. Peace, master marquess, you are malapert :
Your fire-new * stamp of honour is scarce current.
O, that your young nobility could judge
What 'twere to lose it, and be miserable !
They that stand high have many blasts to shake them ;
And if they fall, they dash themselves to pieces.

Glou. Good counsel, marry : learn it, learn it, marquess.

Dor. It toucheth you, my lord, as much as me.
Glou. Yea, and much more : but I was born so high,
Our aery * buildeth in the cedar's top,
And dallies with the wind and scorns the sun.

Q. Mar. And turns the sun to shade ; alas ! alas !
Witness my son, now in the shade of death ;
Whose bright out-shining beams thy cloudy wrath
Hath in eternal darkness folded up.
Your aery * buildeth in our aery's nest.
O God, that seest it, do not suffer it ;
As it was won with blood, lost be it so !

Buck. Have done, have done.

Q. Mar. O princely Buckingham, I'll kiss thy hand,
In sign of league and amity with thee :
Now fair befall thee and thy noble house !
Thy garments are not spotted with our blood,

Nor thou within the compass of my curse.

Buck. Nor no one here ; for curses never pass
The lips of those that breathe them in the air.

Q. Mar. I'll not believe but they ascend the sky,
And there awake God's gentle-sleeping peace.
O Buckingham, take heed of yonder dog !
Look, when he fawns, he bites ; and when he bites,
His venom tooth will rankle to the death ;
Have not to do with him, beware of him ;
Sin, death, and hell have set their marks on him,
And all their ministers attend on him.

Glou. What doth she say, my Lord of Buckingham ?

Buck. Nothing that I respect, my gracious lord.

Q. Mar. What, dost thou scorn me for my gentle counsel ?
And soothe the devil that I warn thee from ?
O, but remember this another day,
When he shall split thy very heart with sorrow,
And say poor Margaret was a prophetess.
Live each of you the subjects to his hate,
And he to yours, and all of you to God's !

[Exit.]

Hast. My hair doth stand on end to hear her curses.

Riv. And so doth mine : I muse why she's at liberty.

Glou. I cannot blame her : by holy Paul,
She hath had too much wrong ; and I repent
My part thereof that I have done to her.

Q. Eliz. I never did her any, to my knowledge.

Glou. But you have all the vantage of her wrong.
I was too hot to do somebody good,
That is too cold in thinking of it now.
Marry, as for Clarence, he is well repaid ;
He is frank'd* up to fatting for his pains :
God pardon them that are the cause of it !

Riv. A virtuous and a Christian-like conclusion,
To pray for them that have done scathe* to us.

Glou. So do I ever : [Aside] being well advised :

For had I cursed now, I had cursed myself.

[Exit.

Enter CATESBY.

Cates. Madam, his majesty doth call for you ;
And for your grace ; and you, my noble lords.

Q. Eliz. Catesby, we come. Lords, will you go with us ?

Riv. Madam, we will attend your grace.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The same. Another room.*

Enter GLOUCESTER.

Glou. I do the wrong, and first begin to brawl.
The secret mischiefs that I set abroach
I lay unto the grievous charge of others.
Clarence, whom I, indeed, have laid in darkness,
I do beweep to many simple gulls ;
Namely, to Hastings, Derby, Buckingham ;
And say it is the queen and her allies
That stir the king against the duke my brother.
Now, they believe it ; and withal whet me
To be revenged on Rivers, Vaughan, Grey :
But then I sigh ; and, with a piece of Scripture,
Tell them that God bids us do good for evil :
And thus I clothe my naked villany
With old odd ends stolen out of holy writ ;
And seem a saint, when most I play the devil.
But, soft ! here come my executioners.

Enter two Murderers.

How now, my hardy stout resolved mates !
Are you now going to dispatch this deed ?

First Murd. We are, my lord ; and come to have the warrant,
That we may be admitted where he is.

Glou. Well thought upon ; I have it here about me ;

[*Gives the warrant.*

When you have done, repair to Crosby Place.
 But, sirs, be sudden in the execution,
 Withal obdurate, do not hear him plead ;
 For Clarence is well-spoken, and perhaps
 May move your hearts to pity, if you mark him.

First Murd. Tush !

Fear not, my lord, we will not stand to prate ;
 Talkers are no good doers : be assured
 We come to use our hands and not our tongues.

Glou. Your eyes drop millstones, when fools' eyes drop tears.
 I like you, lads : about your business straight.
 Go, go, dispatch.

First Murd. We will, my noble lord.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. London. • *The Tower.*

Enter CLARENCE and BRAKENBURY.

Brak. Why looks your grace so heavily to-day ?

Clar. O, I have pass'd a miserable night,
 So full of ugly sights, of ghastly dreams,
 That, as I am a Christian faithful man,
 I would not spend another such a night,
 Though 'twere to buy a world of happy days,
 So full of dismal terror was the time !

Brak. What was your dream ? I long to hear you tell it.

Clar. Methought that I had broken from the Tower,
 And was embark'd to cross to Burgundy ;
 And, in my company, my brother Gloucester ;
 Who from my cabin tempted me to walk
 Upon the hatches : thence we look'd toward England,
 And cited up a thousand fearful times,
 During the wars of York and Lancaster
 That had befall'n us. As we paced along
 Upon the giddy footing of the hatches,

Methought that Gloucester stumbled ; and, in falling,
Struck me, that thought to stay him, overboard,
Into the tumbling billows of the main.

Lord, Lord ! methought what pain it was to drown !

What dreadful noise of waters in mine ears !

What ugly sights of death within mine eyes !

Methought I saw a thousand fearful wrecks ;

Ten thousand men that fishes gnaw'd upon ;

Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,

Inestimable stones, unvalued * jewels,

All scatter'd in the bottom of the sea :

Some lay in dead men's skulls ; and in those holes

Where eyes did once inhabit, there were crept,

As 'twere in scorn of eyes, reflecting gems,

Which woo'd the slimy bottom of the deep,

And mock'd the dead bones that lay scatter'd by.

Brak. Had you such leisure in the time of death
To gaze upon the secrets of the deep ?

Clar. Methought I had ; and often did I strive
To yield the ghost : but still the envious flood
Kept in my soul, and would not let it forth
To seek the empty, vast and wandering air ;
But smother'd it within my panting bulk,
Which almost burst to belch it in the sea.

Brak. Awaked you not with this sore agony ?

Clar. O no, my dream was lengthen'd after life ;
O, then began the tempest to my soul,
Who pass'd, methought, the melancholy flood,
With that grim ferryman which poets write of,
Unto the kingdom of perpetual night.
The first that there did greet my stranger soul,
Was my great father-in-law, renowned Warwick ;
Who cried aloud, ' What scourge for perjury
Can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence ?'
And so he vanish'd : then came wandering by

A shadow like an angel, with bright hair
 Dabbled in blood ; and he shriek'd out aloud,
 ‘ Clarence is come ; false, fleeting,* perjured Clarence,
 That stabb'd me in the field by Tewksbury :
 Seize on him, Furies, take him to your torments !’
 With that, methought, a legion of foul fiends
 Environ'd me about, and howled in mine ears
 Such hideous cries that with the very noise
 I trembling waked, and for a season after
 Could not believe but that I was in hell,
 Such terrible impression made the dream.

Brak. No marvel, my lord, though¹ it affrighted you ;
 I promise you, I am afraid to hear you tell it.

Clar. O Brakenbury, I have done those things,
 Which now bear evidence against my soul,
 For Edward's sake ; and see how he requites me !
 O God ! if my deep prayers cannot appease thee,
 But thou wilt be avenged on my misdeeds,
 Yet execute thy wrath in² me alone ;
 O, spare my guiltless wife and my poor children !
 I pray thee, gentle keeper, stay by me ;
 My soul is heavy, and I fain would sleep.

Brak. I will, my lord : God give your grace good rest !

[*Clarence sleeps.*]

Sorrow breaks seasons and reposing hours,
 Makes the night morning and the noon-tide night.
 Princes have but their titles for their glories,
 An outward honour for an inward toil ;
 And, for unfelt imagination,
 They often feel a world of restless cares :
 So that, betwixt their titles and low names,
 There's nothing differs but the outward fame.

* Here ‘though’ has the force of ‘if.’

² Here ‘in’ is used, as it frequently was of old, with its Latin sense, upon.

Enter the two Murderers.

First Murd. Ho ! who's here ?

Brak. In God's name what are you, and how came you hither ?

First Murd. I would speak with Clarence, and I came hither on my legs.

Brak. Yea, are you so brief ?

Sec. Murd. O sir, it is better to be brief than tedious. Show him our commission ; and talk no more.

[*Brakenbury reads it.*

Brak. I am in this commanded to deliver
The noble Duke of Clarence to your hands :
I will not reason what is meant hereby,
Because I will be guiltless of the meaning.
Here are the keys, and there sits the duke asleep :
I'll to the king ; and signify to him
That thus I have resign'd my charge to you.

First Murd. Do so, it is a point of wisdom : fare you well.

[*Exit Brakenbury.*

Sec. Murd. What, shall we stab him as he sleeps ?

First Murd. No ; then he will say 'twas done cowardly, when he wakes.

Sec. Murd. When he wakes ! why, fool, he shall never wake till the judgement-day.

First Murd. Why, then he will say we stabbed him sleeping.

Sec. Murd. The urging of that word 'judgement' hath bred a kind of remorse in me.

First Murd. What, art thou afraid ?

Sec. Murd. Not to kill him, having a warrant for it ; but to be damned for killing him, from which no warrant can defend us.

First Murd. I thought thou hadst been resolute.

Sec. Murd. So I am, to let him live.

First Murd. Back to the Duke of Gloucester, and tell him so.

Sec. Murd. I pray thee, stay a while : I hope my holy humou

will change ; 'twas wont to hold me but while one would tell twenty.

First Murd. Remember our reward, when the deed is done.

Sec. Murd. 'Zounds, he dies : I had forgot the reward.

First Murd. Where is thy conscience now ?

Sec. Murd. In the Duke of Gloucester's purse.

First Murd. So when he opens his purse to give us our reward, thy conscience flies out.

Sec. Murd. Let it go ; there's few or none will entertain it.

First Murd. Hark ! he stirs : shall I strike ?

Sec. Murd. No, first let's reason with him.

Clar. Where art thou, keeper ? give me a cup of wine.

Sec. Murd. You shall have wine enough, my lord, anon.

Clar. In God's name, what art thou ?

Sec. Murd. A man, as you are.

Clar. But not, as I am, royal.

Sec. Murd. Nor you, as we are, loyal.

Clar. Thy voice is thunder, but thy looks are humble.

Sec. Murd. My voice is now the king's, my looks mine own.

Clar. How darkly and how deadly dost thou speak !

Your eyes do menace me : why look you pale ?

Who sent you hither ? Wherefore do you come ?

Both. To, to, to—

Clar. To murder me ?

Both. Ay, ay.

Clar. You scarcely have the hearts to tell me so,
And therefore cannot have the hearts to do it.

Wherein, my friends, have I offended you ?

First Murd. Offended us you have not, but the king.

Clar. I shall be reconciled to him again.

Sec. Murd. Never, my lord ; therefore prepare to die.

Clar. Are you call'd forth from out a world of men
To slay the innocent ? What is my offence ?

Where are the evidence that do accuse me ?

What lawful quest * have given their verdict up

Unto the frowning judge ? or who pronounced
The bitter sentence of poor Clarence' death ?
Before I be convict* by course of law,
To threaten me with death is most unlawful.
I charge you, as you hope to have redemption
By His dear blood shed for our grievous sins,
That you depart and lay no hands on me :
The deed you undertake is damnable.

First Murd. What we will do, we do upon command.

Sec. Murd. And he that hath commanded is the king.

Clar. Erroneous vassal ! the great King of kings
Hath in the tables of his law commanded
That thou shalt do no murder : and will you then
Spurn at his edict, and fulfil a man's ?
Take heed ; for he holds vengeance in his hands,
To hurl upon their heads that break his law.

First Murd. And that same vengeance doth he hurl on thee,
For false forswearing, and for murder too :
Thou didst receive the holy sacrament,
To fight in quarrel of the house of Lancaster,
And, like a traitor to the name of God,
Didst break that vow ; and with thy treacherous blade
Unrip'dst the bowels of thy sovereign's son,
Whom thou wert sworn to cherish and defend.
How canst thou urge God's dreadful law to us,
When thou hast broke it in so dear * degree ?

Clar. Alas ! for whose sake did I that ill deed ?
For Edward, for my brother, for his sake :
Why, sirs,
He sends ye not to murder me for this ;
For in this sin he is as deep as I.
If God will be revenged for this deed,
O, know you yet, he doth it publicly :
Take not the quarrel from his powerful arm ;
He needs no indirect nor lawless course

To cut off those that have offended him.

First Murd. Who made thee then a bloody minister,
When gallant-springing brave Plantagenet,
That princely novice, was struck dead by thee?

Clar. My brother's love, the devil, and my rage.

First Murd. Thy brother's love, our duty, and thy fault,
Provoke us hither now to slaughter thee.

Clar. Oh, if you love my brother, hate not me ;
I am his brother, and I love him well.

If you be hired for meed, go back again,
And I will send you to my brother Gloucester,
Who shall reward you better for my life
Than Edward will for tidings of my death.

Sec. Murd. You are deceived, your brother Gloucester hates
you.

Clar. O, no, he loves me, and he holds me dear :
Go you to him from me.

Both. Ay, so we will.

Clar. Tell him, when that our princely father York
Bless'd his three sons with his victorious arm,
And charged us from his soul to love each other,
He little thought of this divided friendship :
Bid Gloucester think of this, and he will weep.

First Murd. Ay, millstones ; as he lesson'd us to weep.

Clar. O, do not slander him, for he is kind.

First Murd. Right,
As snow in harvest. Thou deceivest thyself :
'Tis he that sent us hither now to slaughter thee.

Clar. It cannot be ; for when I parted with him,
He hugg'd me in his arms, and swore, with sobs,
That he would labour my delivery.

Sec. Murd. Why, so he doth, now he delivers thee
From this world's thraldom to the joys of heaven.

First Murd. Make peace with God, for you must die, my lord.

Clar. Hast thou that holy feeling in thy soul,

To counsel me to make my peace with God,
And art thou yet to thy own soul so blind,
That thou wilt war with God by murdering me ?
Ah, sirs, consider, he that set you on
To do this deed will hate you for the deed.

Sec. Murd. What shall we do ?

Clar. Relent, and save your souls.

First Murd. Relent ! 'tis cowardly and womanish.

Clar. Not to relent is beastly, savage, devilish.

Which of you, if you were a prince's son,
Being pent from liberty, as I am now,
If two such murderers as yourselves came to you,
Would not entreat for life ?

My friend, I spy some pity in thy looks ;
O, if thine eye be not a flatterer,
Come thou on my side, and entreat for me
As you would beg, were you in my distress :
A begging prince what beggar pities not ?

Sec. Murd. Look behind you, my lord.

First Murd. Take that, and that : if all this will not do,

[*Stabs him.*

I'll drown you in the malmsey-butt within.

Sec. Murd. A bloody deed, and desperately despatch'd !
How fain, like Pilate, would I wish my hands
Of this most grievous guilty murder done ! [The curtain falls.

ACT II.

SCENE I. London. The palace.

Flourish. KING EDWARD sick, QUEEN ELIZABETH, DORSET,
RIVERS, HASTINGS, BUCKINGHAM, GREY, and others discovered.

K. Edw. Why, so : now have I done a good day's work :
You peers, continue this united league :

I every day expect an embassage
 From my Redeemer to redeem me hence ;
 And now in peace my soul shall part to heaven,
 Since I have set my friends at peace on earth.
 Rivers and Hastings, take each other's hand ;
 Dissemble not your hatred, swear your love.

Riv. By heaven, my soul is purged from grudging hate ;
 And with my hand I seal my true heart's love.

Hast. So thrive I, as I truly swear the like !

K. Edw. Take heed you dally not before your king ;
 Lest he that is the supreme King of kings
 Confound your hidden falsehood and award
 Either of you to be the other's end.

Hast. So prosper I, as I swear perfect love !

Riv. And I, as I love Hastings with my heart !

K. Edw. Madam, yourself are not exempt in this,
 Nor your son Dorset ; Buckingham, nor you ;
 You have been factious one against the other.
 Wife, love Lord Hastings, let him kiss your hand ;
 And what you do, do it unfeignedly.

Q. Eliz. Here, Hastings ; I will never more remember
 Our former hatred, so thrive I and mine !

K. Edw. Dorset, embrace him ; Hastings, love lord marquess.

Dor. This interchange of love, I here protest,
 Upon my part shall be unviolable.

Hast. And so swear I, my lord. [They embrace.]

K. Edw. Now, princely Buckingham, seal thou this league
 With thy embracements to my wife's allies,
 And make me happy in your unity.

Buck. [To the Queen] Whenever Buckingham doth turn his
 hate.

On you or yours but with all duteous love
 Doth cherish you and yours, God punish me
 With hate in those where I expect most love !
 When I have most need to employ a friend,

And most assured that he is a friend,
Deep, hollow, treacherous and full of guile,
Be he unto me! this do I beg of heaven,
When I am cold in zeal to you or yours. [They embrace.

K. Edw. A pleasing cordial, princely Buckingham,
Is this thy vow unto my sickly heart.

There wanteth now our brother Gloucester here,
To make the perfect period of this peace.

Buck. And, in good time, here comes the noble duke.

Enter GLOUCESTER.

Glou. Good morrow to my sovereign king and queen ;
And, princely peers, a happy time of day !

K. Edw. Happy indeed, as we have spent the day.
Brother, we have done deeds of charity ;
Made peace of enmity, fair love of hate,
Between these swelling wrong-incensed peers.

Glou. A blessed labour, my most sovereign liege :
Amongst this princely heap, if any here,
By false intelligence, or wrong surmise,
Hold me a foe ;
If I unwittingly, or in my rage,
Have aught committed that is hardly borne
By any in this presence, I desire
To reconcile me to his friendly peace :
'Tis death to me to be at enmity ;
I hate it, and desire all good men's love.
First, madam, I entreat true peace of you,
Which I will purchase with my dutious service ;
Of you, my noble cousin Buckingham,
If ever any grudge were lodged between us ;
Of you, Lord Rivers, and, Lord Grey, of you,
That all without desert have frown'd on me ;
Dukes, earls, lords, gentlemen ; indeed, of all.
I do not know that Englishman alive

With whom my soul is any jot at odds
 More than the infant that is born to-night :
 I thank heaven for my humility.

Q. Eliz. A holy day shall this be kept hereafter :
 I would to heaven all strifes were well compounded.
 My sovereign liege, I do beseech your majesty
 To take our brother Clarence to your grace.

Glou. Why, madam, have I offer'd love for this,
 To be so flouted in this royal presence ?
 Who knows not that the noble duke is dead ?

[They all start, and some of the attendants exeunt.
 You do him injury to scorn his corse.

Q. Eliz. All-seeing heaven, what a world is this !

K. Edw. Is Clarence dead ? the order was reversed.

Glou. But he, poor soul, by your first order died,
 And that a winged Mercury did bear ;
 Some tardy cripple bore the countermand,
 That came too lag* to see him buried.
 God grant that some, less noble and less loyal,
 Nearer in bloody thoughts, but not in blood,
 Deserve not worse than wretched Clarence did,
 And yet go current from suspicion !

Enter DERBY.

Der. A boon, my sovereign, for my service done !

K. Edw. I pray thee, peace : my soul is full of sorrow.

Der. I will not rise, unless your highness grant.

K. Edw. Then speak at once what is it thou demand'st.

Der. The forfeit, sovereign, of my servant's life ;¹
 Who slew to-day a riotous gentleman
 Lately attendant on the Duke of Norfolk.

K. Edw. Have I a tongue to doom my brother's death,
 And shall that tongue give pardon to a slave ?
 My brother slew no man ; his fault was thought,

¹ That is, to remit to me the forfeit of my servant's life.

And yet his punishment was cruel death.
Who sued to me for him ? who, in my rage,
Kneel'd at my feet and bade me be advised ?
Who spake of brotherhood ? who spake of love ?
Who told me how the poor soul did forsake
The mighty Warwick, and did fight for me ?
Who told me, in the field by Tewksbury,
When Oxford had me down, he rescued me,
And said ‘ Dear brother, live, and be a king ? ’
Who told me, when we both lay in the field
Frozen almost to death, how he did lap me
Even in his own garments, and gave himself,
All thin and naked, to the numb cold night ?
All this from my remembrance brutish wrath
Sinfully pluck'd, and not a man of you
Had so much grace to put it in my mind.
But when your carters or your waiting-vassals,
Have done a drunken slaughter and defaced
The precious image of our dear Redeemer,
You straight are on your knees for pardon, pardon ;
And I, unjustly too, must grant it you :
But for my brother not a man would speak,
Nor I, ungracious, speak unto myself
For him, poor soul. The proudest of you all
Have been beholding to him in his life ;
Yet none of you would once plead for his life.
O God, I fear thy justice will take hold
On me, and you, and mine, and yours for this !
Come, Hastings, help me to my closet. Oh, poor Clarence !

[*Exeunt all but Gloucester and Buckingham.*

Glou. This is the fruit of rashness ! Mark'd you not
How that the guilty kindred of the queen
Look'd pale when they did hear of Clarence' death ?
O, they did urge it still unto the king !
God will revenge it.

Re-enter QUEEN ELIZABETH, DORSET after her, meeting the DUCHESS OF YORK.

Q. Eliz. Oh, who shall hinder me to wail and weep,
To chide my fortune and torment myself?
I'll join with black despair against my soul,
And to myself become an enemy.

Duch. What means this scene of rude impatience?

Q. Eliz. To make an act of tragic violence:
Edward, my lord, your son, our king, is dead.

[*Exeunt Gloucester and Buckingham.*]

Why grow the branches now the root is wither'd?
Why wither not the leaves the sap being gone?
If you will live, lament; if die, be brief,
That our swift-winged souls may catch the king's,
Or, like obedient subjects, follow him
To his new kingdom of perpetual rest.

Duch. Ah, so much interest have I in thy sorrow
As I had title in thy noble husband!
I have bewept a worthy husband's death,
And lived by looking on his images:
But now two mirrors of his princely semblance
Are crack'd in pieces by malignant death,
And I for comfort have but one false glass,
Which grieves me when I see my shame in him.
Thou art a widow; yet thou art a mother,
And hast the comfort of thy children left thee:
But death hath snatch'd my husband from mine arms,
And pluck'd two crutches from my feeble limbs,
Edward and Clarence. O, what cause have I,
Thine being but a moiety of my grief,
To overgo thy plants and drown thy cries!

Dor. Comfort, dear mother: God is much displeased
That you take with unthankfulness his doing:
Bethink you, like a careful mother,

Of the young prince your son : send straight for him ;
Let him be crown'd ; in him your comfort lives :
Drown desperate sorrow in dead Edward's grave,
And plant your joys in living Edward's throne.

Re-enter Gloucester, Buckingham, Derby, Hastings and Rivers, with Ratcliff and others.

Glou. Madam, have comfort : all of us have cause
To wail the dimming of our shining star ;
But none can cure their harms by wailing them.
Madam, my mother, I do cry you mercy ;
I did not see your grace : humbly on my knee
I crave your blessing.

Duch. God bless thee, and put meekness in thy mind,
Love, charity, obedience, and true duty !

Glou. [Aside] Amen ; and make me die a good old man !
That is the butt-end of a mother's blessing :
I marvel why her grace did leave it out.

Buck. You cloudy princes and heart-sorrowing peers,
That bear this mutual heavy load of moan,
Now cheer each other in each other's love :
Though we have spent our harvest of this king,
We are to reap the harvest of his son.
Me seemeth good, that, with some little train,
Forthwith from Ludlow the young prince be fetch'd
Hither to London, to be crown'd our king.

Riv. Why with some little train, my Lord of Buckingham ?

Buck. Marry, my lord, lest, by a multitude,
The new-heal'd wound of malice should break out :
As well the fear of harm as harm apparent,
In my opinion, ought to be prevented.

Glou. I hope the king made peace with all of us ;
And the compact is firm and true in me.

Riv. And so in me ; and so, I think, in all :
Yet, since it is but green,* it should be put

To no apparent likelihood of breach,
 Which haply by much company might be urged :
 Therefore I say with noble Buckingham,
 That it is meet so few should fetch the prince.

Hast. And so say I.

Glou. Then be it so ; and go we to determine
 Who they shall be that straight shall post to Ludlow.
 Madam, and you, my mother, will you go
 To give your censures* in this weighty business ?

Q. Eliz. } With all our hearts.
Duch. }

[*Exeunt all but Buckingham and Gloucester.*]

Buck. My lord, whoever journeys to the prince,
 For heaven's sake, let not us two be behind ;
 For, by the way, I'll sort* occasion,
 As index* to the story we late talk'd of,
 To part the queen's proud kindred from the king.

Glou. My other self, my counsel's consistory,
 My oracle, my prophet !—My dear cousin,
 I, like a child, will go by thy direction.
 Towards Ludlow then, for we'll not stay behind.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *London. A street.*

Enter two Citizens, meeting.

First Cit. Neighbour, well met : whither away so fast ?

Sec. Cit. I promise you, I scarcely know myself :
 Hear you the news abroad ?

First Cit. Ay, that the king is dead.

Sec. Cit. Bad news, by'r lady, seldom comes the better :
 I fear, I fear, 'twill prove a troublous world.

Enter another Citizen.

Third Cit. Neighbours, God speed !

First Cit. Give you good Morrow, sir.

Third Cit. Doth this news hold of good King Edward's death?

Sec. Cit. Ay, sir, it is too true; God help the while!

Third Cit. Then, masters, look to see a troublous world.

First Cit. No, no; by God's good grace his son shall reign.

Third Cit. Woe to that land that's govern'd by a child!

'Enter another Citizen.'

First Cit. What is thy news?

Fourth Cit. Lord Rivers and Lord Grey are sent to Pomfret,
With them Sir Thomas Vaughan, prisoners.

First Cit. Who hath committed them?

Fourth Cit. The mighty dukes
Gloucester and Buckingham.

Sec. Cit. For what offence?

Fourth Cit. The sum of all I can, I have disclosed;
Why or for what these nobles were committed
Is all unknown to me.

Third Cit. O, full of danger is the Duke of Gloucester!
And the queen's sons and brothers haught and proud:
And were they to be ruled, and not to rule,
This sickly land might solace as before.

First Cit. Come, come, we fear the worst; all shall be well.

Third Cit. When clouds appear, wise men put on their cloaks;
When great leaves fall, the winter is at hand;
When the sun sets, who doth not look for night?
Untimely storms make men expect a dearth.
All may be well; but, if God sort* it so,
'Tis more than we deserve, or I expect.

Sec. Cit. Truly, the souls of men are full of dread:
You cannot reason * almost with a man
That looks not heavily and full of fear.

Third Cit. Before the times of change, still is it so:
By a divine instinct men's minds mistrust
Ensuing dangers; as, by proof, we see

The waters swell before a boisterous storm.
But leave it all to God. Whither away?

Sec. Cit. Marry, we were sent for to the justices.

Third Cit. And so was I: I'll bear you company. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III. London. A street.

The trumpets sound. Enter the young PRINCE, the Dukes of GLOUCESTER and BUCKINGHAM, CARDINAL BOURCHIER, CATESBY, and others.

Buck. Welcome, sweet prince, to London, to your chamber.¹

Glou. Welcome, dear cousin, my thoughts' sovereign:

The weary way hath made you melancholy.

Prince. No, uncle; but our crosses on the way

Have made it tedious, wearisome, and heavy:

I want more uncles here to welcome me.

Glou. Sweet prince, the untainted virtue of your years
Hath not yet dived into the world's deceit.

Those uncles which you want were dangerous;

Your grace attended to their sugar'd words,

But look'd not on the poison of their hearts:

Heaven keep you from them, and from such false friends!

Prince. Heaven keep me from false friends! but they were none.

Glou. My lord, the mayor of London comes to greet you.

Enter the Lord Mayor and his train.

May. God bless your grace with health and happy days!

Prince. I thank you, good my lord; and thank you all.

I thought my mother and my brother York

Would long ere this have met us on the way:

Fie, what a slug is Hastings, that he comes not

To tell us whether they will come or no!

Buck. And, in good time, here comes the sweating lord.

¹ London was called *Camera Regis*, the King's Chamber, from soon after the conquest.

Enter LORD HASTINGS.

Prince. Welcome, my lord : what, will our mother come ?

Hast. On what occasion, heaven knows, not I,
The queen your mother and your brother York
Have taken sanctuary : the tender prince
Would fain have come with me to meet your grace,
But by his mother was perforce withheld.

Buck. Fie, what an indirect and peevish course
Is this of hers ! Lord cardinal, will your grace
Persuade the queen to send the Duke of York
Unto his princely brother presently ?
If she deny, Lord Hastings, go with him,
And from her jealous arms pluck him perforce.

Card. My Lord of Buckingham, if my weak oratory
Can from his mother win the Duke of York,
Anon expect him here ; but if she be obdurate
To mild entreaties, God in heaven forbid
We should infringe the holy privilege
Of blessed sanctuary ! not for all this land
Would I be guilty of so great a sin.

Buck. You are too senseless-obstinate, my lord,
Too ceremonious and traditional :
Weigh it but with the grossness of this age,¹
You break not sanctuary in seizing him.
Oft have I heard of sanctuary men ;
But sanctuary children ne'er till now.

Card. My lord, you shall o'er-rule my mind for once.
Come on, Lord Hastings, will you go with me ?

Hast. I go, my lord.

Prince. Good lords, make all the speedy haste you may.

[*Exeunt Cardinal and Hastings.*
Say, uncle Gloucester, if our brother come,

¹ That is, but with the gross judgment, the blunted perception of this age.

Where shall we sojourn till our coronation ?

Glou. Where it seems best unto your own royal self.
If I may counsel you, some day or two
Your highness shall repose you at the Tower :
Then where you please, and ¹ shall be thought most fit
For your best health and recreation.

Prince. I do not like the Tower, of any place.
Did Julius Cæsar build that place, my lord ?

Buck. He did, my gracious lord, begin that place ;
Which, since, succeeding ages have re-edified.

Prince. Is it upon record, or else reported
Successively from age to age, he built it ?

Buck. Upon record, my gracious lord.

Prince But say, my lord, it were not register'd,
Methinks the truth should live from age to age,
As 'twere retail'd* to all posterity,
Even to the general all-ending day.

Glou. [Aside] So wise so young, they say, do never live long.

Prince. That Julius Cæsar was a famous man ;
With what his valour did enrich his wit,
His wit set down to make his valour live :
Death makes no conquest of this conqueror ;
For now he lives in fame, though not in life.
I'll tell you what, my cousin Buckingham,
An if I live until I be a man,
I'll win our ancient right in France again,
Or die a soldier, as I lived a king.

Glou. [Aside] Short summers lightly* have a forward spring.

Buck. Now, in good time, here comes the Duke of York.

Enter young YORK, HASTINGS, and the CARDINAL.

Prince. Richard of York ! how fares our loving brother ?

¹ *Where* is understood here ; if it were repeated there would be no difficulty in the construction of the sentence.

York. Well, my dread¹ lord ; so must I call you now.

Prince. Ay, brother, to our grief, as it is yours :
Too late he died that might have kept that title,
Which by his death hath lost much majesty.

Glou. How fares our cousin, noble Lord of York ?

York. I thank you, gentle uncle. O, my lord,
You said that idle weeds are fast in growth :
The prince my brother hath outgrown me far.

Glou. He hath, my lord.

York. And therefore is he idle ?

Glou. O, my fair cousin, I must not say so.

York. Then is he more beholding to you than I.

Glou. He may command me as my sovereign ;
But you have power in me as in a kinsman.

York. I pray you, uncle, give me this dagger.

Glou. My dagger, little cousin ? with all my heart.

Prince. A beggar, brother ?

York. Of my kind uncle, that I know will give ;
And being but a toy, which is no grief to give.

Glou. A greater gift than that I'll give my cousin.

York. A greater gift ! O, that's the sword to it.

Glou. Ay, gentle cousin, were it light enough.

York. O, then, I see, you will part but with light gifts ;
In weightier things you'll say a beggar nay.

Glou. It is too heavy for your grace to wear.

York. I weigh it lightly, were it heavier.

Glou. What, would you have my weapon, little lord ?

York. I would, that I might thank you as you call me.

Glou. How ?

York. Little.

Prince. My Lord of York will still be cross in talk :

¹ He would have called him *dear lord* before their father's death ; but as, after that event, his elder brother became his sovereign, he must call him 'dread lord,' which was a royal title. It is selected with noticeable tact, as the one which marks most strongly the change of relation between the little playfellows.—WHITE.

Uncle, your grace knows how to bear with him.

York. You mean, to bear me, not to bear with me :
Uncle, my brother mocks both you and me ;
Because that I am little, like an ape,
He thinks that you should bear me on your shoulders.

Glou. My lord, will't please you pass along ?
Myself and my good cousin Buckingham
Will to your mother, to entreat of her
To meet you at the Tower and welcome you.

York. What, will you go unto the Tower, my lord ?

Prince. My lord protector needs will have it so.

York. I shall not sleep in quiet at the Tower.

Glou. Why, what should you fear ?

York. Marry, my uncle Clarence' angry ghost :
My grandam told me he was murder'd there.

Prince. I fear no uncles dead.

Glou. Nor none that live, I hope.

Prince. An if they live, I hope I need not fear.
But come, my lord ; and with a heavy heart,
Thinking on them, go I unto the Tower.

[*A Sennet. Exeunt all but Gloucester, Buckingham and Catesby.*

Buck. Think you, my lord, this little prating York
Was not incensed* by his subtle mother
To taunt and scorn you thus opprobriously ?

Glou. No doubt, no doubt : O, 'tis a parlous* boy ;
Bold, quick, ingenious, forward, capable :
He is all the mother's, from the top to toe.

Buck. Well, let them rest. Come hither, Catesby.
Thou art sworn as deeply to effect what we intend
As closely to conceal what we impart :
Thou know'st our reasons urged upon the way ;
What think'st thou ? is it not an easy matter
To make William Lord Hastings of our mind,
For the instalment of this noble duke

In the seat royal of this famous isle ?

Cate. He for his father's sake so loves the prince
That he will not be won to aught against him.

Buck. What think'st thou then of Stanley ? what will he ?

Cate. He will do all in all as Hastings doth.

Buck. Well, then, no more but this : go, gentle Catesby,
And, as it were far off, sound thou Lord Hastings,
How he doth stand affected to our purpose ;
And summon him to-morrow to the Tower,
To sit about the coronation.

If thou dost find him tractable to us,
Encourage him, and show him all our reasons :
If he be leaden, icy-cold, unwilling,
Be thou so too ; and so break off your talk,
And give us notice of his inclination :
For we to-morrow hold divided councils,¹
Wherein thyself shalt highly be employ'd.

Glou. Commend me to Lord William : tell him, Catesby,
His ancient knot of dangerous adversaries
To-morrow are let blood at Pomfret-castle ;
And bid my friend, for joy of this good news,
Give Mistress Shore one gentle kiss the more.

Buck. Good Catesby, go, effect this business soundly.

Cate. My good lords both, with all the heed I may.

Glou. Shall we hear from you, Catesby, ere we sleep ?

Cate. You shall, my lord.

Glou. At Crosby Place, there shall you find us both

[*Exit Catesby.*]

Cousin, when I am king, claim thou of me
The earldom of Hereford, and the moveables
Wherof the king my brother stood possess'd.

Buck. I'll claim that promise at your grace's hands.

Glou. And look to have it yielded with all willingness.

Buck. Now, my lord, what shall we do, if we perceive

¹ A private consultation separate from the known and public council.—JOHNSON.

Lord Hastings will not yield to our complots ?

Glo. Chop off his head, man ; somewhat we will do :
Come, let us sup betimes, that afterwards
We may digest our complots in some form.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *Pomfret Castle.*

Enter SIR RICHARD RATCLIFF, with halberds, conducting RIVERS, GREY, and VAUGHAN to death.

Rat. Come, bring forth the prisoners.

Riv. Sir Richard Ratcliff, let me tell thee this :
To-day shalt thou behold a subject die
For truth, for duty, and for loyalty.

Grey. Heaven keep the prince from all the pack of you !
A knot you are of damned blood-suckers.

Vaug. You live that shall cry woe for this hereafter.

Rat. Dispatch ; the limit of your lives is out.

Riv. O Pomfret, Pomfret ! O thou bloody prison,
Fatal and ominous to noble peers !
Within the guilty closure of thy walls
Richard the second here was hack'd to death ;
And, for more slander to thy dismal seat,
We give thee up our guiltless blood to drink.

Grey. Now Margaret's curse is fall'n upon our heads,
For standing by when Richard stabb'd her son.

Riv. Then cursed she Hastings, then cursed she Buckingham,
Then cursed she Richard. O, remember, God,
To hear her prayers for them, as now for us !
And for my sister and her princely sons,
Be satisfied, dear God, with our true blood,
Which, as thou know'st, unjustly must be spilt.

Rat. Make haste ; the hour of death is expiate.*

Riv. Come, Grey, come, Vaughan, let us all embrace :
And take our leave, until we meet in heaven. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *The Tower of London.*

BUCKINGHAM, DERBY, HASTINGS, *the Bishop of ELY, RATCLIFFE, LOVEL, and others* discovered sitting at a table.

Hast. My lords, at once : the cause why we are met
Is, to determine of the coronation.

In God's name, speak : when is the royal day ?

Buck. Are all things fitting for that royal time ?

Der. They are, and wants but nomination.

Ely. To-morrow then I judge a happy day.

Buck. Who knows the lord prote&tor's mind herein ?
Who is most inward* with the noble duke ?

Ely. Your grace, we think, should soonest know his mind.

Buck. Who, I, my lord ! We know each other's faces,
But for our hearts, he knows no more of mine

Than I of yours ;

Nor I no more of his, than you of mine.

Lord Hastings, you and he are near in love.

Hast. I thank his grace, I know he loves me well ;
But, for his purpose in the coronation,
I have not sounded him, nor he deliver'd
His gracious pleasure any way therein :
But you, my noble lords, may name the time ;
And in the duke's behalf I'll give my voice,
Which, I presume, he'll take in gentle part.

Ely. Now in good time, here comes the duke himself.

Enter GLOUCESTER and CATESBY.

Glou. My noble lords and cousins all, good morrow.
I have been long a sleeper ; but, I hope,
My absence doth neglect no great designs,
Which by my presence might have been concluded.

Buck. Had not you come upon your cue, my lord,
William Lord Hastings had pronounced your part,—
I mean, your voice,—for crowning of the king.

Glou. Than my Lord Hastings no man might be bolder ;
His lordship knows me well, and loves me well.

Hast. I thank your grace.

Glou. My lord of Ely !

Ely. My lord ?

Glou. When I was last in Holborn,
I saw good strawberries in your garden there :
I do beseech you send for some of them.

Ely. Marry and will, my lord, with all my heart. [Exit.

Glou. Cousin of Buckingham, a word with you.

[Drawing him aside.

Catesby hath sounded Hastings in our business,
And finds the testy gentleman so hot,
As he will lose his head ere give consent
His master's son, as worshipful he terms it,
Shall lose the royalty of England's throne.

Buck. Withdraw you hence, my lord, I'll follow you.

[Exit Gloucester, Buckingham following

Der. We have not yet set down this day of triumph.
To-morrow, in mine opinion, is too sudden ;
For I myself am not so well provided
As else I would be, were the day prolong'd.

Re-enter BISHOP OF ELY.

Ely. Where is my lord protector ? I have sent for these strawberries.

Hast. His grace looks cheerfully and smooth to-day ;
There's some conceit or other likes * him well,
When he doth bid good morrow with such a spirit.
I think there's never a man in Christendom
That can less hide his love or hate than he ;
For by his face straight shall you know his heart.

Der. What of his heart perceive you in his face
By any likelihood * he show'd to-day ?

Hast. Marry, that with no man here he is offended ;

For, were he, he had shown it in his looks.

Der. I pray God he be not, I say.

Re-enter GLOUCESTER and BUCKINGHAM.

Glou. [Aside] Go, cousin Buckingham.

The mayor towards Guildhall hies him in all post :
There, at your meet'st advantage of the time,
Infer the bastardy of Edward's children :
Tell them how Edward put to death a citizen,
Only for saying he would make his son
Heir to the crown, meaning indeed his house,
Which, by the sign thereof, was termed so.
Moreover, urge his hateful luxury
And bestial appetite in change of lust.

Buck. Fear not, my lord, I'll play the orator
As if the golden fee for which I plead
Were for myself : and so, my lord, adieu.

Glou. If you thrive well, bring them to Baynard's Castle ;
Where you shall find me well accompanied
With reverend fathers and well-learned bishops.

Buck. I go ; and towards three or four o'clock
Look for the news that the Guildhall affords.

[Exit.]

Glou. Go, Catesby, with all speed to Doctor Shaw ;
[To an Attendant] Go thou to Friar Penker ; bid them both
Meet me within this hour at Baynard's Castle.

[Exeunt Catesby and Attendant.]

Now will I take some privy order,
To draw the brats of Clarence out of sight ;
And to give notice, that no manner of person
At any time have recourse unto the princes.
I pray you all, tell me what they deserve
That do conspire my death with devilish plots
Of damned witchcraft, and that have prevail'd
Upon my body with their hellish charms ?

Hast. The tender love I bear your grace, my lord,

Makes me most forward in this noble presence
To doom the offenders, whatsoever they be :
I say, my lord, they have deserved death.

Glou. Then be your eyes the witness of this ill :
See how I am bewitch'd ; behold, mine arm
Is like a blasted sapling, wither'd up :
And this is Edward's wife, that monstrous witch,
Consorted with that harlot¹ strumpet Shore,
That by their witchcraft thus have marked me.

Hast. If they have done this thing, my gracious lord,—

Glou. If ! thou protector of this damned strumpet,
Tellest thou me of ‘ifs’ ? Thou art a traitor :
Off with his head ! Now, by Saint Paul I swear,
I will not dine until I see the same.
Lovel and Ratcliff, look that it be done :
The rest that love me, rise and follow me.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Baynard's Castle.*

Enter BUCKINGHAM to GLOUCESTER discovered.

Glou. How now, my lord, what say the citizens ?

Buck. The citizens are mum, and speak not a word.

Glou. Touch'd you the bastardy of Edward's children ?

Buck. I did ; with his contract with Lady Lucy,
And his contract by deputy in France ;
The insatiate greediness of his desires,
His tyranny for trifles ; his own bastardy,
And his resemblance, being not like the duke :
Withal I did infer your lineaments,
Being the right idea of your father,
Both in your form and nobleness of mind ;

¹ Here ‘harlot’ is an adjective, implying venality.

Laid open all your victories in Scotland,
Your discipline in war, wisdom in peace,
Your bounty, virtue, fair humility ;
Indeed left nothing fitting for the purpose
Untouch'd or slightly handled in discourse :
And when mine oratory grew to an end,
I bade them that did love their country's good
Cry 'God save Richard, England's royal king !'

Glou. Ah ! and did they so ?

Buck. No, so heaven help me, they spake not a word ;

But, like dumb statuas* or breathing stones,
Gazed each on other, and look'd deadly pale.
Which when I saw, I reprehended them ;
And ask'd the mayor what meant this wilful silence :
His answer was, the people were not wont
To be spoke to but by the recorder.
Then he was urged to tell my tale again :
' Thus saith the duke, thus hath the duke inferr'd ;'
But nothing spake in warrant from himself.
When he had done, some followers of mine own
At the lower end of the hall hurl'd up their caps,
And some ten voices cried, ' God save King Richard !'
And thus I took the vantage of those few,
' Thanks, gentle citizens and friends !' quoth I,
' This general applause and loving shout
Argues your wisdoms and your love to Richard :'
And even here brake off, and came away.

Glou. What tongueless blocks were they ! would they not
speak ?

Buck. No, by my troth, my lord.

Glou. Will not the mayor then and his brethren come ?

Buck. The mayor is here at hand : intend some fear ;
Be not you spoke with, but by mighty suit :
And look you get a prayer-book in your hand,
And stand betwixt two churchmen, good my lord ;

For on that ground I'll build a holy descant : *
 And be not easily won to our request ;
 Play the maid's part, still answer nay, and take it.

Glou. I go ; and if you plead as well for them
 As I can say nay to thee for myself,
 No doubt we'll bring it to a happy issue.

Buck. Go, go ; - the lord mayor knocks. [Exit Gloucester.]

Enter Lovel, the Mayor, and Citizens.

Welcome, my lord : I dance attendance here ;
 I think the duke will not be spoke withal.

Enter Catesby.

Here comes his servant : how now, Catesby,
 What says he ?

Cate. My lord, he doth entreat your grace
 To visit him to-morrow or next day :
 He is within, with two right reverend fathers,
 Divinely bent to meditation ;
 And in no worldly suits would he be moved,
 To draw him from his holy exercise.

Buck. Return, good Catesby, to thy lord again ;
 Tell him, myself, the mayor and citizens,
 In deep designs and matters of great moment,
 No less importing than our general good,
 Are come to have some conference with his grace.

Cate. I'll tell him what you say, my lord.

[Exit.]

Buck. Ah, ah, my lord, this prince is not an Edward !
 He is not lolling on a lewd day-bed,
 But on his knees at meditation ;
 Not dallying with a brace of courtezans,
 But meditating with two deep divines ;
 Not sleeping, to engross * his idle body,
 But praying, to enrich his watchful soul :
 Happy were England, would this gracious prince

Take on himself the sovereignty thereof :
But, sure, I fear, we shall ne'er win him to it.

May. Marry, God forbid his grace should say us nay !
Buck. I fear he will.

Re-enter CATESBY.

How now, Catesby, what says your lord ?

Cate. My lord,
He wonders to what end you have assembled,
His grace not being warn'd thereof before :
My lord, he fears you mean no good to him.
Buck. Sorry I am my noble cousin should
Suspect me, that I mean no good to him :
By heaven, I come in perfect love to him ;
And so once more return and tell his grace. [Exit Catesby.
When holy and devout religious men
Are at their beads, 'tis hard to draw them thence,
So sweet is zealous contemplation.

Re-enter CATESBY.

May. See, where he stands between two clergymen !

Buck. Two props of virtue for a Christian prince,
To stay him from the fall of vanity :
And, see, a book of prayer in his hand,
True ornaments to know a holy man.

Enter GLOUCESTER between two Bishops.

Famous Plantagenet, most gracious prince,
Lend favourable ears to our request ;
And pardon us the interruption
Of thy devotion and right Christian zeal.

Glou. My lord, there needs no such apology :
I rather do beseech you pardon me,
Who, earnest in the service of my God,
Neglect the visitation of my friends.

But, leaving this, what is your grace's pleasure ?

Buck. Even that, I hope, which pleaseth God above
And all good men of this ungovern'd isle.

Glou. I do suspect I have done some offence
That seems disgracious in the city's eyes,
And that you come to reprehend my ignorance.

Buck. You have, my lord : would it might please your grace,
At our entreaties, to amend that fault !

Glou. Else wherefore breathe I in a Christian land ?

Buck. Then know, it is your fault that you resign
The supreme seat, the throne majestical,
The scepter'd office of your ancestors,
Your state of fortune and your due of birth,
The lineal glory of your royal house,
To the corruption of a blemish'd stock :
Whilst, in the mildness of your sleepy thoughts,
Which here we waken to our country's good,
The noble isle doth want her proper limbs ;
Her face defaced with scars of infamy,
Her royal stock graft with ignoble plants,
And almost shoulder'd * in the swallowing gulf
Of blind forgetfulness and deep oblivion.
Which to recure,* we heartily solicit
Your gracious self to take on you the charge
And kingly government of this your land ;
Not as protector, steward, substitute,
Or lowly factor for another's gain ;
But as successively, from blood to blood,
Your right of birth, your empery, your own.
For this, consort'd with the citizens,
Your very worshipful and loving friends,
And by their vehement instigation,
In this just suit come I to move your grace.

Glou. I know not whether to depart in silence,
Or bitterly to speak in your reproof

Best fitteth my degree or your condition :
If not to answer, you might haply think
Tongue-tied ambition, not replying, yielded
To bear the golden yoke of sovereignty,
Which fondly you would here impose on me ;
If to reprove you for this suit of yours
So season'd with your faithful love to me,
Then, on the other side, I check'd my friends.
Therefore, to speak, and to avoid the first,
And then, in speaking, not to incur the last,
Definitively thus I answer you.

Your love deserves my thanks, but my desert
Unmeritable shuns your high request.
First, if all obstacles were cut away
And that my path were even to the crown,
As my ripe revenue and due by birth ;
Yet so much is my poverty of spirit,
So mighty and so many my defects,
As I had rather hide me from my greatness.
But, God be thanked, there's no need of me,
The royal tree hath left us royal fruit,
Which, mellow'd by the stealing hours of time,
Will well become the seat of majesty,
And make, no doubt, us happy by his reign.
On him I lay what you would lay on me,
The right and fortune of his happy stars ;
Which God defend that I should wring from him !

Buck. My lord, this argues conscience in your grace ;
But the respects thereof are nice * and trivial,
All circumstances well considered.
Good my lord, take to your royal self
This proffer'd benefit of dignity ;
If not to bless us and the land withal,
Yet to draw forth your noble ancestry
From the corruption of abusing times,

Unto a lineal true-derived course.

May. Do, good my lord, your citizens entreat you.

Buck. Refuse not, mighty lord, this proffer'd love.

Cate. O, make them joyful, grant their lawful suit!

Glou. Alas, why would you heap these cares on me?

I am unfit for state and majesty :

I do beseech you, take it not amiss ;

I cannot nor I will not yield to you.

Buck. If you refuse it,—as, in love and zeal,
Loath to depose the child, your brother's son ;
As well we know your tenderness of heart,—
Yet whether you accept our suit or no,
Your brother's son shall never reign our king ;
But we will plant some other in the throne,
To the disgrace and downfall of your house :
And in this resolution here we leave you.
Come, citizens : 'zounds ! I'll entreat no more.

Glou. O, do not swear, my lord of Buckingham.

[Exit Buckingham with the Citizens.]

Cate. My lord, accept their suit.

Lov. Do, good my lord, lest all the land do rue it.

Glou. Would you enforce me to a world of care ?
Well call them again. [Exit Catesby.] I am not made of stone,
But penetrable to your kind entreaties.

Albeit against my conscience and my soul.

Re-enter BUCKINGHAM, and the rest.

Cousin of Buckingham, and you sage, grave men,
Since you will buckle fortune on my back,
To bear her burthen, whether I will or no,
I must have patience to endure the load :
But if black scandal or foul-faced reproach
Attend the sequel of your imposition,
Your mere enforcement shall acquittance me
From all the impure blots and stains thereof ;

For heaven knows, and you may partly see,
How far I am from the desire thereof.

May. God bless your grace ! we see it, and will say it.

Glou. In saying so, you shall but say the truth.

Buck. Then I salute you with this kingly title :
Long live Richard, England's royal king !

May. and Cit. Amen.

Buck. To-morrow will it please you to be crown'd ?

Glou. Even when you please, since you will have it so.

Buck. To-morrow then we will attend your grace :
And so most joyfully we take our leave.

Glou. Farewell, good cousin ; farewell, gentle friends.

[*To the Bishops*] Come, let us to our holy task again. [Exeunt.

SCENE II. Before the Tower.

Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH, DUCHESS OF YORK, and MARQUESS OF DORSET.

Duch. Who meets us here ? my niece ¹ Plantagenet
Led in the hand of her kind aunt of Gloucester ?
Now, for my life, she's wandering to the Tower,
On pure heart's love to greet the tender princes.

Enter ANNE, DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER, leading LADY MARGARET PLANTAGENET, CLARENCE'S young daughter.

Daughter, well met.

Anne. God give your graces both
A happy and a joyful time of day !

Q. Eliz. As much to you, good sister ! Whither away ?

Anne. No farther than the Tower, and, as I guess,
Upon the like devotion as yourselves,
To gratulate the gentle princes there.

Q. Eliz. Kind sister, thanks : we'll enter all together.

¹ That is, grand-daughter. In *Othello* 'nephews' are put for grandchildren.

And, in good time, here the lieutenant comes.

Enter BRAKENBURY.

Master lieutenant, pray you, by your leave,
How doth the prince, and my young son of York?

Brak. Right well, dear madam. By your patience,
I may not suffer you to visit them ;
The king hath straitly charged the contrary.

Q. Eliz. The king ! why, who's that ?

Brak. I cry you mercy : I mean the lord protector.

Q. Eliz. The Lord protect him from that kingly title !
Hath he set bounds betwixt their love and me ?

I am their mother ; who should keep me from them ?

Duch. I am their father's mother ; I will see them.

Anne. Their aunt I am in law, in love their mother :
Then bring me to their sights ; I'll bear thy blame,
And take thy office from thee, on my peril.

Brak. No, madam, no ; I may not leave it so :
I am bound by oath, and therefore pardon me.

[*Exit.*]

Enter LORD STANLEY.

Stan. Let me but meet you, ladies, one hour hence,
And I'll salute your grace of York as mother,
And reverend looker on, of two fair queens.

[*To Anne*] Come, madam, you must straight to Westminster,
There to be crowned Richard's royal queen.

Anne. Despitful tidings ! O unpleasing news !

Dor. Be of good cheer : mother, how fares your grace ?

Q. Eliz. O Dorset, speak not to me, get thee hence !

Death and destruction dog thee at the heels ;

Thy mother's name is ominous to children.

If thou wilt outstrip death, go cross the seas,

And live with Richmond, from the reach of hell :

Go, hie thee, hie thee from this slaughter-house,

Lest thou increase the number of the dead ;

And make me die the thrall of Margaret's curse,
Nor mother, wife, nor England's counted queen.

Stan. Full of wise care is this your counsel, madam.
Take all the swift advantage of the hours ;
You shall have letters from me to my son
To meet you on the way, and welcome you.
Be not ta'en tardy by unwise delay.

Duch. O ill-dispersing wind of misery !

Stan. Come, madam, come ; I in all haste was sent.

Anne. And I in all unwillingness will go.
I would to God that the inclusive verge
Of golden metal that must round my brow
Were red-hot steel, to sear me to the brain !
Anointed let me be with deadly venom,
And die, ere men can say, God save the queen !

[*Exit with Stanley.*

Q. Eliz. Poor heart, adieu ! I pity thy complaining.

Dor. Farewell, thou woful welcomer of glory !

Duch. [*To Dorset*] Go thou to Richmond, and good fortune
guide thee !

[*To Queen Eliz.*] Go thou to sanctuary, and good thoughts pos-
sess thee !

I to my grave, where peace and rest lie with me !

Eighty odd years of sorrow have I seen,

And each hour's joy wreck'd with a week of teen.*

Q. Eliz. Stay, yet look back with me unto the Tower.
Pity, you ancient stones, those tender babes
Whom envy hath immured within your walls !
Rough cradle for such little pretty ones !
Rude ragged nurse, old sullen playfellow
For tender princes, use my babies well !
So foolish sorrow bids your stones farewell. [The curtain falls.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *London. The Palace.*

Sennet. RICHARD, *in pomp, crowned; BUCKINGHAM, CATESBY, a Page, and others discovered.*

K. Rich. Stand all apart. [*Exeunt all but Richard, Buckingham, Catesby and Page.*] Cousin of Buckingham!

Buck. My gracious sovereign.

K. Rich. Give me thy hand. Thus high, by thy advice
And thy assistance, is king Richard seated :
But shall we wear these honours for a day ?
Or shall they last, and we rejoice in them ?

Buck. Still live they and for ever may they last !

K. Rich. O Buckingham, now do I play the touch,*
To try if thou be current gold indeed :
Young Edward lives : think now what I would say.

Buck. Say on, my loving lord.

K. Rich. Why, Buckingham, I say, I would be king.

Buck. Why, so you are, my thrice renowned liege.

K. Rich. Ha ! am I king ? 'tis so : but Edward lives.

Buck. True, noble prince.

K. Rich. O bitter consequence,
That Edward still should live ! 'True, noble prince !'
Cousin, thou wert not wont to be so dull :
Shall I be plain ? I wish the bastards dead ;
And I would have it suddenly perform'd.
What sayest thou ? speak suddenly ; be brief.

Buck. Your grace may do your pleasure.

K. Rich. Tut, tut, thou art all ice, thy kindness freezeth :
Say, have I thy consent that they shall die ?

Buck. Give me some breath, some little pause, my lord,

Before I positively speak herein :
I will resolve your grace immediately.

[Exit.]

K. Rich. I will converse with iron-witted fools

[Descends from his throne.]

And unrespective * boys : none are for me
That look into me with considerate eyes :
High-reaching Buckingham grows circumspe&t.
Boy !

Page. My lord.

K. Rich. Know'st thou not any whom corrupting gold
Would tempt unto a close exploit of death ?

Page. My lord, I know a discontented gentleman,
Whose humble means match not his haughty mind :
Gold were as good as twenty orators,
And will, no doubt, tempt him to any thing.

K. Rich. What is his name ?

Page. His name, my lord, is Tyrrel.

K. Rich. I partly know the man : go, call him hither.

[Exit Page.]

The deep-revolving witty Buckingham
No more shall be the neighbour to my counsel :
Hath he so long held out with me untired,
And stops he now for breath ?

Enter STANLEY.

How now ! what news with you ?

Stan. My lord, I hear the Marquess Dorset's fled
To Richmond, in those parts beyond the sea
Where he abides.

K. Rich. Catesby !

Cate. My lord ?

K. Rich. Rumour it abroad
That Anne, my wife, is sick and like to die :
[Aside] I will take order for her keeping close.
Inquire me out some mean-born gentleman,

[*Aside*] Whom I will marry straight to Clarence' daughter :
 The boy is foolish, and I fear not him.
 Look, how thou dream'st ! I say again, give out
 That Anne my wife is sick, and like to die :
 About it ; [*Exit Catesby.*] for it stands me much upon,
 To stop all hopes whose growth may damage me.

[*He ascends the throne.*]

I must be married to my brother's daughter,
 Or else my kingdom stands on brittle glass.
 Murder her brothers, and then marry her !
 Uncertain way of gain ! But I am in
 So far in blood that sin will pluck on sin :
 Tear-falling pity dwells not in this eye.

Re-enter Page with TYRREL.

Is thy name Tyrrel ?

Tyr. James Tyrrel, and your most obedient subject.

K. Rich. Art thou, indeed ?

Tyr. Prove me, my gracious sovereign.

K. Rich. Darest thou resolve to kill a friend of mine ?

Tyr. Ay, my lord ;

But I had rather kill two enemies.

K. Rich. Why, there thou hast it : two deep enemies,
 Foes to my rest and my sweet sleep's disturbers
 Are they that I would have thee deal upon :
 Tyrrel, I mean those bastards in the Tower.

Tyr. Let me have open means to come to them,
 And soon I'll rid you from the fear of them.

K. Rich. Thou sing'st sweet music. Hark, come hither, Tyrrel :
 Go, by this token : rise, and lend thine ear : [*Whispers.*]
 There is no more but so : say it is done,
 And I will love thee, and prefer thee too.

Tyr. 'Tis done, my gracious lord.

K. Rich. Shall we hear from thee, Tyrrel, ere we sleep ?

Tyr. Ye shall, my lord. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter BUCKINGHAM.

Buck. My lord, I have consider'd in my mind
The late demand that you did sound me in.

K. Rich. Well, let that pass. Dorset is fled to Richmond.

Buck. I hear that news, my lord.

K. Rich. Stanley, he is your wife's son: well, look to it.

Buck. My lord, I claim your gift, my due by promise,
For which your honour and your faith is pawn'd;
The earldom of Hereford and the moveables
The which you promised I should possess.

K. Rich. Stanley, look to your wife: if she convey
Letters to Richmond, you shall answer it.

Buck. What says your highness to my just demand?

K. Rich. As I remember, Henry the Sixth
Did prophesy that Richmond should be king,
When Richmond was a little peevish boy.

A king, perhaps, perhaps,—

Buck. My lord!

K. Rich. How chance the prophet could not at that time
Have told me, I being by, that I should kill him?

Buck. My lord, your promise for the earldom,—

K. Rich. Richmond! When last I was at Exeter,
The mayor in courtesy show'd me the castle,
And call'd it Rougemont: at which name I started,
Because a bard of Ireland told me once,
I should not live long after I saw Richmond.

Buck. My lord!

K. Rich. Ay, what's o'clock?

Buck. I am thus bold to put your grace in mind
Of what you promised me.

K. Rich. Well, but what's o'clock?

Buck. Upon the stroke of ten.

K. Rich. Well, let it strike.

Buck. Why, let it strike?

K. Rich. Because that, like a Jack, thou keep'st the stroke
Betwixt thy begging and my meditation.

I am not in the giving vein to-day. [Descends from his throne.]

Buck. Why, then resolve me whether you will or no.

K. Rich. Tut, tut,
Thou troublest me; I am not in the vein.

[*Exeunt all but Buckingham.*]

Buck. Is it even so? rewards he my true service
With such deep contempt? made I him king for this?
O, let me think on Hastings, and be gone
To Brecknock,¹ while my fearful head is on!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II. *The same. Another room.*

Enter TYRREL.

Tyr. The tyrannous and bloody deed is done,
The most arch act of piteous massacre
That ever yet this land was guilty of.
Dighton and Forrest, whom I did suborn
To do this ruthless piece of butchery,
Although they were flesh'd villains, bloody dogs,
Melting with tenderness and mild compassion
Wept like two children, in their deaths' sad stories.
'Lo thus,' quoth Dighton, 'lay those tender babes:'
'Thus, thus,' quoth Forrest, 'girdling one another
Within their innocent alabaster arms:
Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,
Which in their summer beauty kiss'd each other.
A book of prayers on their pillow lay;
Which once,' quoth Forrest, 'almost changed my mind;
But O! the devil'—there the villain stopp'd;
Whilst Dighton thus told on: 'We smothered
The most replenished sweet work of nature
That from the prime creation e'er she framed.'

¹ This was the name of the Duke's castle in Wales.

Thus both are gone with conscience and remorse ;
They could not speak ; and so I left them both,
To bring this tidings to the bloody king.
And here he comes :

Enter KING RICHARD.

All hail, my sovereign liege !

K. Rich. Kind Tyrrel, am I happy in thy news ?

Tyr. If to have done the thing you gave in charge
Beget your happiness, be happy then,
For it is done, my lord.

K. Rich. But didst thou see them dead ?

Tyr. I did, my lord.

K. Rich. And buried, gentle Tyrrel ?

Tyr. The chaplain of the Tower hath buried them ;
But how or in what place I do not know.

K. Rich. Come to me, Tyrrel, soon at after supper,
And thou shalt tell the process of their death.
Meantime, but think how I may do thee good,
And be inheritor of thy desire.

Farewell till soon.

[*Exit Tyrrel.*

The son of Clarence have I pent up close ;
His daughter meanly have I match'd in marriage ;
The sons of Edward sleep in Abraham's bosom,
And Anne my wife hath bid the world good night.
Now, for I know the Breton Richmond aims
At young Elizabeth, my brother's daughter,
And, by that knot, looks proudly o'er the crown,
To her I go, a jolly thriving wooer.

Enter CATESBY.

Cate. My lord !

K. Rich. Good news or bad, that thou comest in so bluntly ?

Cate. Bad news, my lord : Ely is fled to Richmond ;
And Buckingham, back'd with the hardy Welshmen,
Is in the field, and still his power increaseth.

K. Rich. Ely with Richmond troubles me more near
 Than Buckingham and his rash-levied army.
 Come, I have heard that fearful commenting
 Is leaden servitor to dull delay ;
 Delay leads impotent and snail-paced beggary :
 Then fiery expedition be my wing,
 Jove's Mercury, and herald for a king !
 Come, muster men : my counsel is my shield ;
 We must be brief when traitors brave the field.

[*Exeunt.*]SCENE III. *Before the palace.**Enter QUEEN MARGARET.*

Q. Mar. So, now prosperity begins to mellow
 And drop into the rotten mouth of death.
 Here in these confines slyly have I lurk'd,
 To watch the waning of mine adversaries.
 A dire induction am I witness to,
 And will to France, hoping the consequence
 Will prove as bitter, black, and tragical.
 Withdraw thee, wretched Margaret : who comes here ?

Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH and the DUCHESS OF YORK.

Q. Eliz. Ah, my young princes ! ah, my tender babes !
 My unblown flowers, new-appearing sweets !
 If yet your gentle souls fly in the air
 And be not fix'd in doom perpetual,
 Hover about me with your airy wings
 And hear your mother's lamentation !

Q. Mar. Hover about her ; say, that right for right
 Hath dimm'd your infant morn to aged night.

Duch. So many miseries have crazed my voice,
 That my woe-wearied tongue is mute and dumb.
 Edward Plantagenet, why art thou dead ?

Q. Mar. Plantagenet doth quit Plantagenet,

Edward for Edward pays a dying debt.

Q. Eliz. Wilt thou, O God, fly from such gentle lambs,
And throw them in the entrails of the wolf?

When didst thou sleep when such a deed was done?

O, who hath any cause to mourn but I?

Q. Mar. [Advancing] If ancient sorrow be most reverend,
Give mine the benefit of seniory,*

And let my woes frown on the upper hand.

Bear with me; I am hungry for revenge,

And now I cloy me with beholding it.

Thy Edward he is dead, that stabb'd my Edward;

Thy other Edward dead, to quit my Edward;

Young York he is but boot,* because both they

Match not the high perfection of my loss:

Thy Clarence he is dead that kill'd my Edward;

And the beholders of this tragic play,

The adulterate Hastings, Rivers, Vaughan, Grey,

Untimely smother'd in their dusky graves.

Richard yet lives, hell's black intelligencer,

Only reserved their factor, to buy souls

And send them thither: but at hand, at hand,

Ensues his piteous and unpitied end:

Earth gapes, hell burns, fiends roar, saints pray,

To have him suddenly convey'd away.

Cancel his bond of life, dear God, I pray,

That I may live to say, The dog is dead!

Q. Eliz. O, thou didst prophesy the time would come

That I should wish for thee to help me curse

That bottled spider, that foul bunch-back'd toad!

Q. Mar. I call'd thee then vain flourish of my fortune;

I call'd thee then poor shadow, painted queen;

A sign of dignity, a garish * flag

To be the aim of every dangerous shot;

A queen in jest, only to fill the scene.

Where is thy husband now? where be thy brothers?

Where are thy children? wherein dost thou joy?
 Who sues to thee and cries, ‘God save the queen’?
 Where be the bending peers that flatter’d thee?
 Where be the thronging troops that follow’d thee?
 Decline * all this, and see what now thou art:
 For happy wife a most distressed widow;
 For joyful mother, one that wails the name;
 For queen, a very caitiff crown’d with care;
 For one being sued to, one that humbly sues;
 For one that scorn’d at me, now scorn’d of me;
 For one being fear’d of all, now fearing one;
 For one commanding all, obey’d of none.
 Thus hath the course of justice wheel’d about,
 And left thee but a very prey to time;
 Having no more but thought of what thou wert,
 To torture thee the more, being what thou art.
 Thou didst usurp my place, and dost thou not
 Usurp the just proportion of my sorrow?
 Now thy proud neck bears half my burthen’d yoke;
 From which even here I slip my weary neck,
 And leave the burthen of it all on thee.
 Farewell, York’s wife, and queen of sad mischance:
 These English woes shall make me smile in France.

Q. Eliz. O thou well skill’d in curses, stay awhile,
 And teach me how to curse mine enemies!

Q. Mar. Forbear to sleep the nights, and fast the days;
 Compare dead happiness with living woe;
 Think that thy babes were fairer than they were,
 And he that slew them fouler than he is:
 Bettering thy loss makes the bad causer worse:
 Revolving this will teach thee how to curse.

[*Exit.*]

Duch. Why should calamity be full of words?
Q. Eliz. Poor breathing orators of miseries!
 Let them have scope: though what they do impart
 Help not at all, yet do they ease the heart.

Duch. If so, then be not tongue-tied: go with me,
And in the breath of bitter words let's smother
My damned son, which thy two sweet sons smother'd.
I hear his drum: be copious in exclaims.

Enter KING RICHARD, marching, with drums and trumpets.

K. Rich. Who intercepts my expedition?

Duch. O, she that might have intercepted thee,
From all the slaughters, wretch, that thou hast done!

Q. Eliz. Hidest thou that forehead with a golden crown,
Where should be graven, if that right were right,
The slaughter of the prince that owed* that crown,
And the dire death of my two sons and brothers?
Tell me, thou villain slave, where are my children?

Duch. Thou toad, thou toad, where is thy brother Clarence?
And little Ned Plantagenet, his son?

Q. Eliz. Where is kind Hastings, Rivers, Vaughan, Grey?

K. Rich. A flourish, trumpets! strike alarum, drums!
Let not the heavens hear these tell-tale women
Rail on the Lord's anointed: strike, I say. [Flourish. Alarums.
Either be patient, and entreat me fair,
Or with the clamorous report of war
Thus will I drown your exclamations.

Duch. Art thou my son?

K. Rich. Ay, I thank God, my father, and yourself.

Duch. Then patiently hear my impatience.

K. Rich. Madame, I have a touch of your condition,
Which cannot brook the accent of reproof.

Duch. O, let me speak!

K. Rich. Do, then; but I'll not hear.

Duch. I will be mild and gentle in my speech.

K. Rich. And brief, good mother; for I am in haste.

Duch. Art thou so hasty? I have stay'd for thee,
God knows, in anguish, pain and agony.

K. Rich. And came I not at last to comfort you?

Duch. No, by the holy rood,* thou know'st it well,
 Thou camest on earth to make the earth my hell.
 A grievous burthen was thy birth to me ;
 Tetchy and wayward was thy infancy ;
 Thy school-days frightful, desperate, wild, and furious,
 Thy prime of manhood daring, bold, and venturous,
 Thy age confirm'd, proud, subtle, bloody, treacherous,
 More mild, but yet more harmful, kind in hatred :
 What comfortable hour canst thou name,
 That ever graced me in thy company ?

K. Rich. Faith, none; but Humphrey Hour,¹ that call'd your
 grace
 To breakfast once forth of my company.
 If I be so disgracious in your sight,
 Let me march on, and not offend your grace.
 Strike up the drum.

Duch. I prithee, hear me speak.
K. Rich. You speak too bitterly.
Duch: Hear me a word ;
 For I shall never speak to thee again.

K. Rich. So.
Duch. Either thou wilt die, by God's just ordinance,
 Ere from this war thou turn a conqueror,
 Or I with grief and extreme age shall perish
 And never look upon thy face again.
 Therefore take with thee my most heavy curse ;
 Which, in the day of battle, tire thee more
 Than all the complete armour that thou wear'st !
 My prayers on the adverse party fight ;
 And there the little souls of Edward's children
 Whisper the spirits of thine enemies
 And promise them success and victory.
 Bloody thou art, bloody will be thy end ;

¹ ‘Humphrey Hour,’ is merely used in ludicrous language for ‘hour,’ like ‘Tom Troth’ for ‘truth.’—MALONE.

Shame serves thy life and doth thy death attend.

[Exit.]

Q. Eliz. Though far more cause, yet much less spirit to curse
Abides in me ; I say amen to all.

K. Rich. Stay, madam ; I must speak a word with you.

Q. Eliz. I have no more sons of the royal blood
For thee to murder : for my daughters, Richard,
They shall be praying nuns, not weeping queens ;
And therefore level* not to hit their lives.

K. Rich. You have a daughter call'd Elizabeth,
Virtuous and fair, royal and gracious.

Q. Eliz. And must she die for this ? O, let her live,
And I'll corrupt her manners, stain her beauty,
Throw over her the veil of infamy,
So she may live unscarr'd of bleeding slaughter.

K. Rich. Madam, so thrive I in my enterprise
And dangerous success of bloody wars,
As I intend more good to you and yours
Than ever you or yours were by me wrong'd !
So in the Lethé* of thy angry soul
Thou drown the sad remembrance of those wrongs
Which thou supposest I have done to thee.

Q. Eliz. Be brief, lest that the process of thy kindness
Last longer telling than thy kindness' date.

K. Rich. Then know, that from my soul I love thy daughter.
And mean to make her queen of England.

Q. Eliz. How canst thou woo her ?

K. Rich. That would I learn of you,
As one that are best acquainted with her humour.

Q. Eliz. And wilt thou learn of me ?

K. Rich. Madam, with all my heart.

Q. Eliz. Send to her, by the man that slew her brothers,
A pair of bleeding hearts ; thereon engrave
Edward and York ; then haply she will weep :
Therefore present to her,—as sometime Margaret
Did to thy father, steep'd in Rutland's blood,—

A handkerchief ; which, say to her, did drain
The purple sap from her sweet brother's body,
And bid her dry her weeping eyes therewith.
If this inducement force her not to love,
Send her a story of thy noble acts ;
Tell her thou madest away her uncle Clarence,
Her uncle Rivers ; yea, and, for her sake,
Madest quick conveyance with her good aunt Anne.

K. Rich. Come, come, you mock me ; this is not the way
To win your daughter.

Q. Eliz. There is no other way ;
Unless thou couldst put on some other shape,
And not be Richard that hath done all this.

K. Rich. Look, what is done cannot be now amended :
Men shall deal unadvisedly sometimes,
Which after-hours give leisure to repent.
If I did take the kingdom from your sons,
To make amends, I'll give it to your daughter.
Again shall you be mother to a king,
And all the ruins of distressful times
Repair'd with double riches of content.
What ! we have many goodly days to see :
The liquid drops of tears that you have shed
Shall come again, transform'd to orient pearl,
Advantaging their loan with interest
Of ten times double gain of happiness.
Go, then, my mother, to thy daughter go ;
Make bold her bashful years with your experience ;
Prepare her ears to hear a wooer's tale ;
Put in her tender heart the aspiring flame
Of golden sovereignty :
And when this arm of mine hath chastised
The petty rebel, dull-brain'd Buckingham,
Bound with triumphant garlands will I come
And lead thy daughter to a conqueror's bed ;

To whom I will retail my conquest won,
 And she shall be sole victress, Cæsar's Cæsar.
 Therefore, good mother,—I must call you so—
 Be the attorney * of my love to her.
 Plead what I will be, and not what I have been ;
 Not my deserts, but what I will deserve :
 Urge the necessity and state of times,
 And be not peevish-fond in great designs.

Q. Eliz. Shall I be tempted of the devil thus ?

K. Rich. Ay, if the devil tempt thee to do good.

Q. Eliz. Shall I forget myself to be myself ?

K. Rich. Ay, if yourself's remembrance wrong yourself.

Q. Eliz. Shall I go win my daughter to thy will ?

K. Rich. And be a happy mother by the deed.

Q. Eliz. I go. Write to me very shortly,
 And you shall understand from me her mind.

K. Rich. Bear her my true love's kiss ; and so, farewell.

[Exit Queen Elizabeth.]

Relenting fool, and shallow, changing woman !

Enter RATCLIFF ; CATESBY following.

How now ! what news ?

Rat. My gracious sovereign, on the western coast
 Rideth a puissant navy ; to the shore
 Throng many doubtful hollow-hearted friends,
 Unarm'd, and unresolved to beat them back :
 'Tis thought that Richmond is their admiral ;
 And there they hull,* expecting but the aid
 Of Buckingham to welcome them ashore.

K. Rich. Some light-foot friend post to the Duke of Norfolk :
 Ratcliff, thyself, or Catesby ; where is he ?

Cate. Here, my lord.

K. Rich. Fly to the duke. [To Ratcliff] Post thou to Salisbury :
 When thou comest thither,—[To Catesby] Dull unmindful villain,
 Why stand'st thou still, and go'st not to the duke ?

Cate. First, mighty sovereign, let me know your mind,
What from your grace I shall deliver to him.

K. Rich. O, true, good Catesby: bid him levy straight
The greatest strength and power he can make,
And meet me presently at Salisbury.

Cate. I go.

[*Exit.*]

Rat. What, is't your highness' pleasure I shall do
At Salisbury?

K. Rich. Why, what wouldst thou do there before I go?

Rat. Your highness told me I should post before.

K. Rich. My mind is changed, sir, my mind is changed.

Enter LORD STANLEY.

How now, what news with you?

Stan. None good, my lord, to please you with the hearing:
Nor none so bad, but it may well be told.

K. Rich. Hoyday, a riddle! neither good nor bad!
Why dost thou run so many mile about,
When thou mayst tell thy tale a nearer way?
Once more, what news?

Stan. Richmond is on the seas.

K. Rich. There let him sink, and be the seas on him!
White-liver'd runagate, what doth he there?

Stan. I know not, mighty sovereign, but by guess.

K. Rich. Well, sir, as you guess, as you guess?

Stan. Stirr'd up by Dorset, Buckingham, and Ely,
He makes for England, there to claim the crown.

K. Rich. Is the chair empty? is the sword unsway'd?
Is the king dead? the empire unpossess'd?
What heir of York is there alive but we?
And who is England's king but great York's heir?
Then, tell me, what doth he upon the sea?

Stan. Unless for that, my liege, I cannot guess.

K. Rich. Unless for that he comes to be your liege,
You cannot guess wherefore the Welshman comes.

Thou wilt revolt and fly to him, I fear.

Stan. No, mighty liege ; therefore mistrust me not.

K. Rich. Where is thy power then to beat him back ?

Where be thy tenants and thy followers ?

Are they not now upon the western shore,

Safe-conducting the rebels from their ships ?

Stan. No, my good lord, my friends are in the north.

K. Rich. Cold friends to Richard : what do they in the north,
When they should serve their sovereign in the west ?

Stan. They have not been commanded, mighty sovereign :
Please it your majesty to give me leave,
I'll muster up my friends, and meet your grace
Where and what time your majesty shall please.

K. Rich. Ay, ay, thou wouldest be gone to join with Richmond :
I will not trust you, sir.

Stan. Most mighty sovereign,
You have no cause to hold my friendship doubtful :
I never was nor never will be false.

K. Rich. Well,
Go muster men ; but, hear you, leave behind
Your son, George Stanley : look your faith be firm,
Or else his head's assurance is but frail.

Stan. So deal with him as I prove true to you.

[*Exit.*

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My gracious sovereign, now in Devonshire,
As I by friends am well advertised,
Sir Edward Courtney, and the haughty prelate
Bishop of Exeter, his brother there,
With many more confederates, are in arms.

Enter another Messenger.

Sec. Mess. My liege, in Kent, the Guildfords are in arms ;
And every hour more competitors *
Flock to their aid, and still their power increaseth.

Enter another Messenger.

Third Mess. My lord, the army of the Duke of Buckingham—

K. Rich. Out on you, owls ! nothing but songs of death ?

[*He striketh him.*]

Take that, until thou bring me better news.

Third Mess. The news I have to tell your majesty
Is, that by sudden floods and fall of waters,
Buckingham's army is dispersed and scatter'd ;
And he himself wander'd away alone,
No man knows whither.

K. Rich. I cry thee mercy. [*Throws him a purse.*
Hath any well-advised friend proclaim'd
Reward to him that brings the traitor in ?

Third Mess. Such proclamation hath been made, my liege.

Enter EARL OF SURREY.

Sur. Sir Thomas Lovel and Lord Marquess Dorset,
'Tis said, my liege, in Yorkshire are in arms.
Yet this good comfort bring I to your grace,
The Breton navy is dispersed by tempest :
Richmond, in Dorsetshire, sent out a boat
Unto the shore, to ask those on the banks
If they were his assistants, yea, or no ;
Who answer'd him, they came from Buckingham
Upon his party : he, mistrusting them,
Hoised sail and made away for Brittany.

Re-enter CATESBY.

Cate. My liege, the Duke of Buckingham is taken ;
That is the best news : that the Earl of Richmond
Is with a mighty power landed at Milford,
Is colder tidings, yet they must be told.

K. Rich. Away towards Salisbury ! while we reason here
A royal battle might be won and lost :
Some one take order Buckingham be brought

To Salisbury ; the rest march on with me.
March on, march on, since we are up in arms ;
If not to fight with foreign enemies,
Yet to beat down these rebels here at home. [Flourish. *Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. - *The camp near Tamworth.*

Enter RICHMOND, OXFORD, BLUNT, HERBERT, and others.

Richm. Fellows in arms, and my most loving friends,
Bruised underneath the yoke of tyranny,
Thus far into the bowels of the land
Have we march'd on without impediment ;
And here receive we from our father Stanley
Lines of fair comfort and encouragement.
The wretched, bloody, and usurping boar,
That spoil'd your summer fields and fruitful vines,
Swills your warm blood like wash, and makes his trough
In your embowell'd bosoms, this foul swine
Lies now even in the centre of this isle,
Near to the town of Leicester, as we learn :
From Tamworth thither is but one day's march,
In God's name, cheerly on, courageous friends,
To reap the harvest of perpetual peace
By this one bloody trial of sharp war.

Oxf. Every man's conscience is a thousand swords,
To fight against that bloody homicide.

Herb. I doubt not but his friends will fly to us.

Blunt. He hath no friends but who are friends for fear,
Which in his greatest need will shrink from him.

Richm. All for our vantage. Then, in God's name, march :
True hope is swift, and flies with swallow's wings ;
Kings it makes gods, and meaner creatures kings. [Exeunt.

SCENE II. Bosworth Field.

Enter KING RICHARD in arms, with NORFOLK, RATCLIFF, the EARL OF SURREY, and Soldiers with Richard's tent.

K. Rich. Here pitch our tents, even here in Bosworth field.

[*Ratcliff attends to pitching the King's tent.*

My Lord of Surrey, why look you so sad?

Sur. My heart is ten times lighter than my looks.

K. Rich. My Lord of Norfolk,—

Nor. Here, most gracious liege.

K. Rich. Norfolk, we must have knocks; ha! must we not?

Nor. We must both give and take, my gracious lord.

K. Rich. Up with my tent there! here will I lie to-night:
But where to-morrow? Well, all's one for that.

Who hath descried the number of the foe?

Nor. Six or seven thousand is their utmost power.

K. Rich. Why, our battalion trebles that account:
Besides, the king's name is a tower of strength,
Which they upon the adverse party want.
Up with my tent there! Valiant gentlemen,
Let us survey the vantage of the field;
Call for some men of sound direction:—
Let's want no discipline, make no delay;
For, lords, to-morrow is a busy day.

[*Exit with Norfolk and Surrey.—Scene closed in.*

SCENE III. Another part of the field. Richmond's tent.

Enter RICHMOND, OXFORD, BLUNT, HERBERT and other Lords.

Richm. The weary sun hath made a golden set,
And by the bright track of his fiery car
Gives signal of a goodly day to-morrow.
Sir William Brandon, you shall bear my standard.
Give me some ink and paper in my tent:

I'll draw the form and model of our battle,
 Limit each leader to his several charge,
 And part in just proportion our small strength.
 My Lord of Oxford, you Sir William Brandon,
 And you Sir Walter Herbert, stay with me.
 The Earl of Pembroke keeps his regiment :¹
 Good Captain Blunt, bear my good-night to him,
 And by the second hour in the morning
 Desire the earl to see me in my tent :
 Yet one thing more, good Blunt, before thou go'st,
 Where is Lord Stanley quarter'd, dost thou know ?

Blunt. Unless I have mista'en his colours much,
 Which well I am assured I have not done,
 His regiment lies half a mile at least
 South from the mighty power of the king.

Richm. If without peril it be possible,
 Good Captain Blunt, bear my good-night to him,
 And give him from me this most needful scroll.

Blunt. Upon my life, my lord, I'll undertake it ;
 And so, God give you quiet rest to-night !

Richm. Good night, good Captain Blunt.

[*Exit Blunt.*
Come, Gentlemen,

Let us consult upon to-morrow's business :
 In to our tent ! the air is raw and cold.

[*As they are about to withdraw into the tent,*

Re-enter BLUNT, with DERBY.

Blunt. My lord, the Earl of Derby.

[*Exit.*

Der. Fortune and victory sit on thy helm !

Richm. All comfort that the dark night can afford
 Be to thy person, noble father-in-law !
 Tell me, how fares our loving mother ?

¹ That is, keeps with his regiment. 'Regiment' was used in Shakespeare's time to mean any considerable body of men, under the command of one leader, and without reference to the number or organization of the troops that composed it.

Der. I, by attorney,* bless thee from thy mother,
 Who prays continually for Richmond's good :
 So much for that. The silent hours steal on :
 In brief, for so the season bids us be,
 Prepare thy battle early in the morning,
 And put thy fortune to the arbitrement
 Of bloody strokes and mortal-staring war.
 I, as I may—that which I would I cannot,—
 With best advantage will deceive the time,
 And aid thee in this doubtful shock of arms :
 But on thy side I may not be too forward,
 Lest, being seen, thy brother, tender George,
 Be executed in his father's sight.

Farewell : the leisure and the fearful time
 Cuts off the ceremonious vows of love
 And ample interchange of sweet discourse
 Which so long sunder'd friends should dwell upon :
 God give us leisure for these rites of love !
 Once more, adieu : be valiant, and speed well !

Richm. Good lords, conduct him to his regiment :

[*Exeunt Oxford and Herbert, with Derby.*

I'll strive, with troubled thoughts, to take a nap ;
 Lest leaden slumber peise * me down to-morrow,
 When I should mount with wings of victory :
 Once more, good night, kind lords and gentlemen.

[*Exeunt all but Richmond, who retires into his tent.*

O Thou, whose captain I account myself,
 Look on my forces with a gracious eye ;
 Put in their hands thy bruising irons of wrath,
 That they may crush down with a heavy fall
 The usurping helmets of our adversaries !
 Make us thy ministers of chastisement,
 That we may praise thee in the victory !
 To thee I do commend my watchful soul,
 Ere I let fall the windows of mine eyes :

Sleeping and waking, O, defend me still! [The tent is closed.

SCENE IV. Bosworth Field. The same as scene second.

Enter, to his tent, KING RICHARD, with NORFOLK, RATCLIFF, CATESBY, and others.

K. Rich. What is't o'clock?

Cate. It's supper-time, my lord;

It's nine o'clock.

K. Rich. I will not sup to-night.

Give me some ink and paper.

What, is my beaver easier than it was
And all my armour laid into my tent?

Cate. It is, my liege; and all things are in readiness.

K. Rich. Good Norfolk, hie thee to thy charge;
Use careful watch, choose trusty sentinels.

Nor. I go, my lord.

K. Rich. Stir with the lark to-morrow, gentle Norfolk.

Nor. I warrant you, my lord.

[Exit.

K. Rich. Catesby!

Cate. My lord?

K. Rich. Send out a pursuivant at arms
To Stanley's regiment; bid him bring his power
Before sunrising, lest his son George fall
Into the blind cave of eternal night.

[Exit Catesby.

Fill me a bowl of wine. Give me a watch.*

Saddle white Surrey for the field to-morrow.

Look that my staves be sound; and not too heavy.

Ratcliff!

Rat. My lord!

K. Rich. Saw'st thou the melancholy Lord Northumberland?

Rat. Thomas the Earl of Surrey, and himself,
Much about cock-shut* time, from troop to troop
Went through the army, cheering up the soldiers.

K. Rich. So, I am satisfied. Give me a bowl of wine :
I have not that alacrity of spirit,
Nor cheer of mind, that I was wont to have.
Set it down. Is ink and paper ready ?

Rat. It is, my lord.

K. Rich. Bid my guard watch. Leave me. Ratcliff,
About the mid of night come to my tent
And help to arm me. Leave me, I say.

[*Exeunt all but King Richard, who retires into his tent.*]

Enter the Ghost of PRINCE EDWARD, son to HENRY the Sixth.

Ghost. Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow !
Think, how thou stab'dst me in my prime of youth
At Tewkesbury : despair, therefore, and die !

[*Exit.*]

Enter the Ghost of HENRY the Sixth.

Ghost. Think on the Tower and me : despair, and die !
Harry the Sixth bids thee despair and die !

[*Exit.*]

Enter the Ghost of CLARENCE.

Ghost. Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow !
Poor Clarence, by thy guile betrayed to death.
To-morrow in the battle think on me,
And fall thy edgeless sword : despair, and die !

[*Exit.*]

Enter the Ghosts of RIVERS, GREY, and VAUGHAN.

Ghost of R. Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow,
Rivers, that died at Pomfret ! despair and die !

Ghost of G. Think upon Grey, and let thy soul despair !

Ghost of V. Think upon Vaughan, and, with guilty fear,
Let fall thy lance : despair, and die !

[*Exeunt Ghosts.*]

Enter the Ghost of HASTINGS.

Ghost. Bloody and guilty, guiltily awake,
And in a bloody battle end thy days !
Think on Lord Hastings : despair, and die !

[*Exit.*]

Enter the Ghosts of the two young Princes.

Ghosts. Dream on thy cousins smother'd in the Tower:
Let us be lead within thy bosom, Richard,
And weigh thee down to ruin, shame, and death !
Thy nephews' souls bid thee despair and die ! [*Exeunt Ghosts.*]

Enter the Ghost of LADY ANNE.

Ghost. Richard, thy wife, that wretched Anne thy wife,
Now fills thy sleep with perturbations :
To-morrow in the battle think on me,
And fall thy edgeless sword : despair, and die ! [*Exit.*]

Enter the Ghost of BUCKINGHAM.

Ghost. The first was I that help'd thee to the crown ;
The last was I that felt thy tyranny :
O, in the battle think on Buckingham,
And die in terror of thy guiltiness !
Dream on, dream on, of bloody deeds and death :
Fainting, despair ; despairing, yield thy breath ! [*Exit.*]

[*King Richard starts out of his dream.*]

K. Rich. Give me another horse : bind up my wounds.
Have mercy, Jesu !—Soft ! I did but dream.
O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me !
The lights burn blue. It is now dead midnight.
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.
What do I fear ? myself ? there's none else by.
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain.
Perjury, perjury, in the high'st degree ;
Murder, stern murder, in the direst degree ;
All several sins, all used in each degree,
Throng to the bar, crying all ‘ Guilty ! guilty ! ’
I shall despair. There is no creature loves me ;
And if I die, no soul shall pity me.

Enter RATCLIFF.

Rat. My lord !

K. Rich. Who's there ?

Rat. Ratcliff, my lord ; 'tis I. The early village-cock
Hath twice done salutation to the morn ;
Your friends are up, and buckle on their armour.

K. Rich. O, Ratcliff, I have dream'd a fearful dream !
What thinkest thou, will our friends prove all true ?

Rat. No doubt, my lord.

R. Rich. O Ratcliff, I fear, I fear,—

Rat. Nay, good my lord, be not afraid of shadows.

K. Rich. By the apostle Paul, shadows to-night
Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard
Than can the substance of ten thousand soldiers
Armed in proof, and led by shallow Richmond.
It is not yet near day. Come, go with me ;
Under our tents I'll play the eaves-dropper,
To see if any mean to shrink from me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *Bosworth Field.* *The same as scene third.*

Enter OXFORD, BLUNT, HERBERT and others, to RICHMOND in his tent.

Lords. Good morrow, Richmond !

Richm. Cry mercy, lords and watchful gentlemen,
That you have ta'en a tardy sluggard here.

Oxf. How have you slept, my lord ?

Richm. The sweetest sleep, and fairest-boding dreams
That ever enter'd in a drowsy head,
Have I since your departure had, my lords.
Methought their souls, whose bodies Richard murder'd,
Came to my tent, and cried on victory :
I promise you, my soul is very jocund
In the remembrance of so fair a dream.
How far into the morning is it, lords ?

Herb. Upon the stroke of four.

Richm. Why, then, 'tis time to arm and give direction.
More than I have said, loving countrymen,
The leisure and enforcement of the time
Forbids to dwell upon: yet remember this,
God and our good cause fight upon our side;
The prayers of holy saints and wronged souls,
Like high-rear'd bulwarks, stand before our faces.
Richard except, those whom we fight against
Had rather have us win than him they follow:
For what is he they follow? truly, gentlemen,
A bloody tyrant and a homicide;
One raised in blood, and one in blood establish'd;
One that made means to come by what he hath,
And slaughter'd those that were the means to help him;
A base foul stone, made precious by the foil
Of England's chair, where he is falsely set;
One that hath ever been God's enemy:
Then, if you fight against God's enemy,
God will in justice ward you as his soldiers;
If you do sweat to put a tyrant down,
You sleep in peace, the tyrant being slain;
If you do fight against your country's foes,
Your country's fat shall pay your pains the hire;
If you do fight in safeguard of your wives,
Your wives shall welcome home the conquerors;
If you do free your children from the sword,
Your children's children quit it in your age.
Then, in the name of God and all these rights,
Advance your standards, draw your willing swords.
For me, the ransom of my bold attempt
Shall be this cold corpse on the earth's cold face;
But if I thrive, the gain of my attempt
The least of you shall share his part thereof.
Sound drums and trumpets boldly and cheerfully;

God and Saint George ! Richmond and victory !

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *Bosworth Field.* *The same as scenes second and fourth.*

KING RICHARD, RATCLIFF, Attendants and Forces discovered.

K. Rich. What said Northumberland as touching Richmond ?

Rat. That he was never trained up in arms.

K. Rich. He said the truth : and what said Surrey, then ?

Rat. He smiled and said ‘The better for our purpose.’

K. Rich. He was in the right ; and so indeed it is.

[*The clock striketh.*]

Tell the clock there. Give me a calendar.

Who saw the sun to-day ?

Rat. Not I, my lord.

K. Rich. Then he despairs to shine ; for by the book
He should have braved the east an hour ago :

A black day will it be to somebody.

Ratcliff !

Rat. My lord ?

K. Rich. The sun will not be seen to-day ;
The sky doth frown and lour upon our army.
I would these dewy tears were from the ground.
Not shine to-day ! Why, what is that to me
More than to Richmond ? for the self same heaven
That frowns on me looks sadly upon him.

Enter NORFOLK.

Nor. Arm, arm, my lord ; the foe vaunts in the field.

K. Rich. Come, bustle, bustle. Caparison my horse.
Call up Lord Stanley, bid him bring his power :
I will lead forth my soldiers to the plain.

Nor. Warlike sovereign,
This found I on my tent this morning.

[*He sheweth him a paper.*]

K. Rich. [Reads] ‘Jockey of Norfolk, be not too bold,

For Dickon thy master is bought and sold.'
A thing devised by the enemy.

Go, gentlemen, every man unto his charge :
Let not our babbling dreams affright our souls :
Conscience is but a word that cowards use,
Devised at first to keep the strong in awe :
Our strong arms be our conscience, swords our law.
March on, join bravely, let us to't pell-mell ;
If not to heaven, then hand in hand to hell.
What shall I say more than I have inferr'd ?
Remember whom you are to cope withal ;
A sort of vagabonds, rascals, and runaways,
A scum of Bretons, and base lackey peasants,
Whom their o'er-cloyed country vomits forth
To desperate ventures and assured destruction.
Let's whip these stragglers o'er the seas again,
Lash hence these overweening rags of France,
These famish'd beggars, weary of their lives.
If we be conquer'd, let men conquer us,
And not these bastard Bretons.

[*Drum afar off.*

Hark ! I hear their drum.
Fight, gentlemen of England ! fight, bold yeomen !
Draw, archers, draw your arrows to the head !
Spur your proud horses hard, and ride in blood ;—

Enter CATESBY.

What says Lord Stanley? will he bring his power?

Cate. My lord, he doth deny to come.

K. Rich. Off with his son George's head !

Nor. My lord, the enemy is past the marsh :
After the battle let George Stanley die.

K. Rich. A thousand hearts are great within my bosom :
Advance our standards, set upon our foes ;
Our ancient word of courage, fair Saint George,
Inspire us with the spleen of fiery dragons !

Upon them ! Victory sits on our helms.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII. *Another part of the field.*

Alarum : excursions. Enter NORFOLK, to him CATESBY.

Cate. Rescue, my Lord of Norfolk, rescue, rescue !
 The king enacts more wonders than a man,
 Daring an opposite to every danger :
 His horse is slain, and all on foot he fights,
 Seeking for Richmond in the throat of death.
 Rescue, fair lord, or else the day is lost !

[*Exeunt.*]

Alarums. Enter KING RICHARD and CATESBY.

K. Rich. A horse ! a horse ! my kingdom for a horse !

Cate. Withdraw, my lord ; I'll help you to a horse.

K. Rich. Slave, I have set my life upon a cast,
 And I will stand the hazard of the die. [Exit Catesby.
 I think there be six Richards in the field ;
 Five have I slain to-day instead of him.
 A horse ! a horse ! my kingdom for a horse ! [Exit.

SCENE VIII. *Another part of the field.*

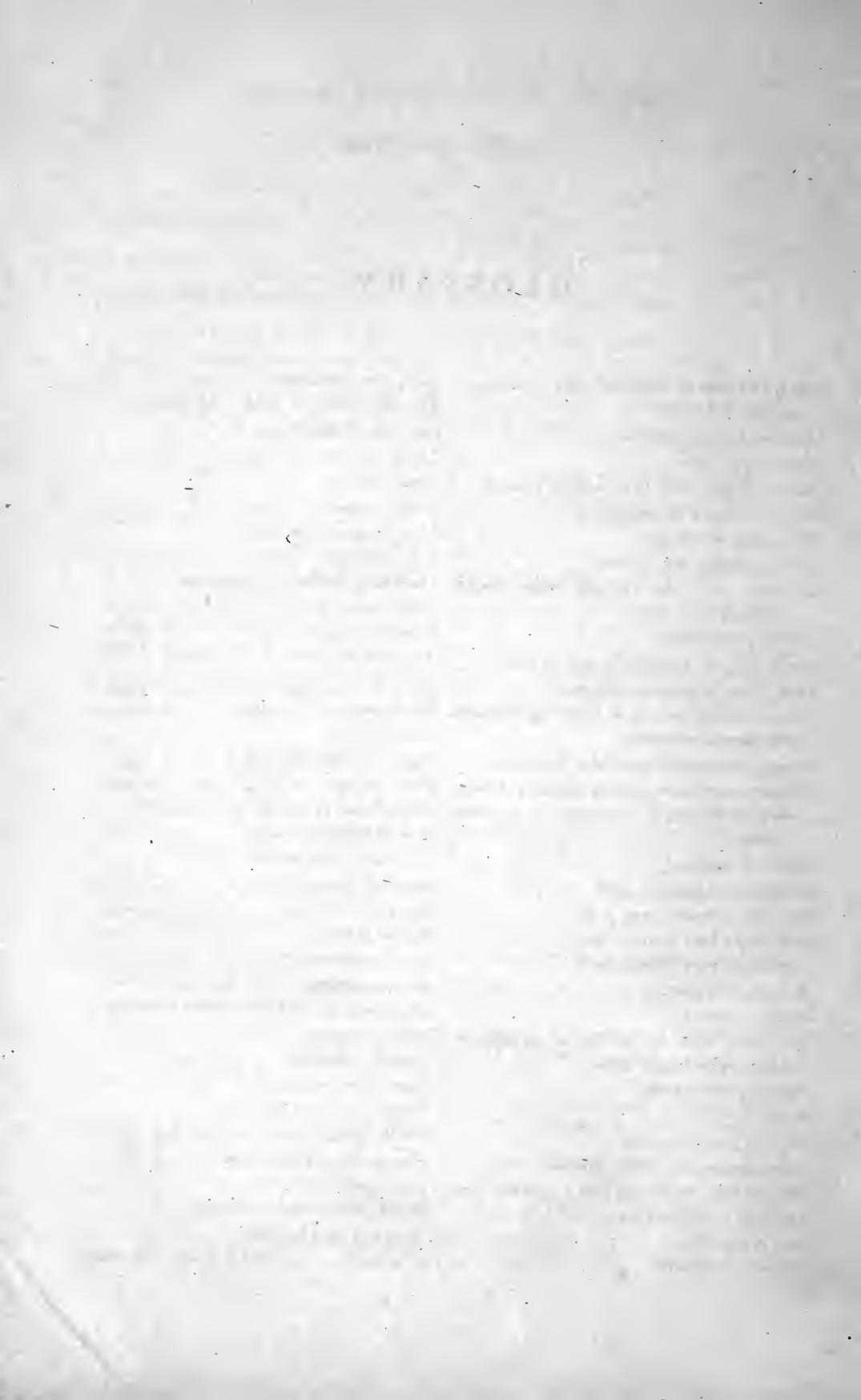
Alarum. Richard's and Richmond's Forces discovered in battle.

. Enter RICHARD and RICHMOND fighting ; Richard is slain. Retreat and flourish. Enter DERBY bearing the crown, with divers other Lords, and Forces.

Richm. God and your arms be praised, victorious friends !
 The day is ours ; the bloody dog is dead. [The curtain falls.

GLOSSARY.

<i>Aery</i> , the nest of a bird of prey ; used also for the bird itself.	<i>Jack</i> , a mean fellow.
<i>Atonement</i> , reconciliation.	<i>Key-cold</i> , intensely cold, cold as iron.
<i>Attorney</i> , an agent.	<i>Lag</i> , late, behindhand.
<i>Barbed</i> , caparisoned in a warlike manner.	<i>Lethe</i> , the river of oblivion, or death.
<i>Basilisk</i> , a kind of ordnance.	<i>Level</i> , to aim.
<i>Boot</i> , odds, advantage.	<i>Lewd</i> , ignorant, foolish.
<i>Censure</i> , judgment, opinion.	<i>Lightly</i> , easily, generally.
<i>Cock-shut time</i> , the twilight when cocks and hens go to roost.	<i>Like</i> , to please.
<i>Convict</i> , convicted.	<i>Likelihood</i> , promise, appearance.
<i>Competitor</i> , an associate in any object.	<i>Make</i> , to do.
<i>Dear</i> , dire, important, extreme.	<i>Measure</i> , a stately dance.
<i>Decline</i> , to enumerate, as in going through the cases of a noun.	<i>Mew up</i> , to confine.
<i>Denier</i> , the twelfth part of a French sol.	<i>Nice</i> , foolish, daintily, precise.
<i>Descant</i> , a variation upon a melody ; hence, metaphorically, a comment on a given theme.	<i>Obsequiously</i> , funereally.
<i>Diffused</i> , confused.	<i>Owe</i> , to own.
<i>Direction</i> , judgment, skill.	<i>Parlous</i> , keen, shrewd.
<i>Engross</i> , to make gross or fat.	<i>Peise</i> , to balance, weigh down.
<i>Exhale</i> , to hale or draw out.	<i>Quest</i> , inquiry, search, inquest, jury.
<i>Expedient</i> , expeditious, swift.	<i>Reason</i> , converse.
<i>Expiate</i> , completed.	<i>Recure</i> , to cure, recover.
<i>Feature</i> , beauty.	<i>Retailed</i> , handed down.
<i>Fire-new</i> , with the glitter of novelty on, like newly-forged metal.	<i>Rood</i> , the crucifix.
<i>Fleeting</i> , inconstant.	<i>Scathe</i> , injury.
<i>Franked</i> , confined.	<i>Seniory</i> , seniority.
<i>Garish</i> , gaudy, staring.	<i>Sort</i> , to choose.
<i>Green</i> , immature, fresh, unused.	<i>Shouldered</i> , A word of doubtful meaning.
<i>Hull</i> , to drift on the sea like a wrecked ship.	<i>Statua</i> , a statue.
<i>Incensed</i> , incited, egged on.	<i>Suspect</i> , suspicion.
<i>Index</i> , a preface.	<i>Teen</i> , grief, trouble.
<i>Inward</i> , intimate.	<i>Temper</i> , to mold like wax.
	<i>Touch</i> , touchstone for testing gold.
	<i>Unrespective</i> , inconsiderate.
	<i>Unvalued</i> , invaluable.
	<i>Warn</i> , to summon.
	<i>Watch</i> , a watch-light.
	<i>Wis</i> , in the compound ‘I wis,’ certainly.



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